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THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

SIR JAMES STEPHEN

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AUTHOR OF "ESSAYS IN ECCLESIASTICAL BIOGRAPHY"
AND "LECTURES ON THE HISTORY OF FRANCE"

LETTERS

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

BY HIS DAUGHTER

CAROLINE EMELIA STEPHEN

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INTRODUCTION

NO complete biography of my Father has been written, nor could any such task now be attempted. It was deliberately declined, soon after his death in 1859, by the united judgment of his widow and children. And this decision was taken on two grounds. The chief and most obvious objection to the undertaking lay in the fact that the main work of his life was done in the Colonial Office (as Permanent Under-Secretary) under conditions precluding its being claimed as his own—so that any biographical record of it must of necessity have been so imperfect as to be misleading. In the second place, the thought of publishing any biography of one who in all things so deliberately preferred privacy appeared to us to be almost forbidden by the very strength of his influence.

Yet this natural reluctance has in some degree been lessened by time; and it so happens that each of his surviving sons did publish something respecting him. My brother Fitzjames prefixed a short "Biographical Notice" to the cheap edition of "Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography," published soon after my father's death. This "Notice," while giving the outward facts of my father's life, severely refrains, (under the influence of the feelings just referred to,) from any fulness of personal history. In

my brother Leslie's Life of Fitzjames,* published in 1895, there is a sketch of my father, which, though necessarily on a small scale, seems to me to be a wonderfully good likeness as far as it goes.

Something, however, I believe still remains to be placed upon record: although for private circulation only. In neither of these two biographical notices was it possible that any adequate account should be given of his religious experience, or of the profound and devout reverence, which to anyone living in close intimacy with my father, must have appeared to be his predominant characteristic. His religious opinions may be gathered with some fulness from his published writings; and I am in possession of many letters from which some additional light may be thrown upon them. But that habitual preference for privacy—that reserve in speaking of what was most sacred to him,—already alluded to affects even his correspondence, and makes it difficult fully to convey, even by his own words, the nature of his living influence on those around him.

It is not, indeed, the form taken by people's opinions respecting the mysteries of the Divine Life that chiefly concerns those who come within their influence. It is rather the manner of working of the Life itself in each heart, the degree in which it is faithfully yielded to, and the nature of the spiritual fruits borne by it, which give to any record of individual experience its value as a part of "the inheritance of the saints in light;" leaving behind a radiance able in its measure to illuminate other lives.

* "Life of Sir James Fitzjames Stephen," by his brother, Leslie Stephen. Smith, Elder and Co., 1895.

That which, above all things, I should wish to convey is a glimpse of something less tangible, more lasting, than any opinion, however deeply cherished. Such a glimpse of the kind of influence exerted by my father's character, may, I think, even now be conveyed by a gathering up of the impressions left on each of his three surviving children, together with a brief mention of the main facts of his life, and such passages from his private correspondence as are still available, and as seem to be most characteristic. The result will certainly not be a full-length portrait, but a mere sketch from memory. Such a sketch may, I trust, be given without transgressing any of the limits he himself would have wished to impose upon his children. That after more than forty-six years from his death, such a compilation, privately printed, should be the nearest approach to a record of his full and laborious life, seems to me to be in a certain sense in harmony with the hidden nature of his work for his country, and with the love of retirement which accompanied, and in some degree veiled, his rare gifts.

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CHAPTER I

1789—1833

LONDON—KENSINGTON GORE

Letters to T. E. Dicey, Miss Venn, Alfred Stephen, Henry Taylor

MY father was born at Lambeth on the 3rd Jan., 1789. He was the third son of James Stephen, Master in Chancery, best known as the zealous ally and supporter in the anti-slavery movement, both in Parliament and by his writings, of his brother-in-law, William Wilberforce.*

We have but scanty records of my father's earliest years. He was educated at various schools, and finally at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, whence he writes to his dear and life-long friend, Thomas Edward Dicey, of Claybrook Hall, Leicestershire.

To T. E. Dicey

7th Dec., 1810—Midnight

". . . . . It has frequently of late occurred to me that if the world at large, or even the sober, reflecting part

* Mr Wilberforce's sister was my grandfather's second wife, and had no children. His first wife, my grandmother, died before my father was old enough to have any distinct remembrance of her. Her maiden name was Anne Stent.

of it, really believed a 1000th part of what almost everyone professes to believe, the state of society, both public and domestic, would assume an appearance perfectly new. If each individual really believed that in the lapse of a few years at farthest, he should commence an endless course of agony or ecstasy, varied from one age to another by new modes of suffering or enjoyment, would not nine-tenths of the hurly-burly of this great city cease, and our porters and draymen even assume the manner and deportment of peripatetic sages? I protest I sometimes imagine (when I see the old and the young, the wise and the silly in every direction, expressing their anxiety about their ambitions or selfish prospects, and feel myself carried away by the general current) that we are all either mad or dreaming. All this, you will say, is exceedingly true—was propounded on Thursday last at Trinity Church—may be heard there again on Sunday next—and would hardly be considered original even by the judicious Mr Hertford himself. I acquiesce in the justice of your criticism; but again I say—is it not unintelligible and inexplicable upon any known principles, that with such a stake depending, we are wrangling, and whistling, and dancing with as little care and reflection as if the whole were a fable? Redeamus! Whenever you take your degree let me hear, if you can do so without inconvenience and delay, notice of your progress . . . for *after all* I shall be much interested in your success. . . . ."

In the year 1811 my father was called to the bar, and from the first had no lack of business. In 1813 he was appointed Counsel to the Colonial Department. "His duties were to report upon all acts of colonial legislature." This office being "compatible with the pursuit of his profession, my father in a few years. . . was in a position which gave him as fair a prospect of obtaining professional honours as was enjoyed by any man of his standing." [L.S.] On the 22nd Dec. he married Jane Catherine Venn, second daughter of John Venn, Rector of Clapham, and grand-daughter of Henry Venn, Vicar of Huddersfield, and afterwards Rector of Yelling; who was the author of "The Complete Duty of Man," and well known in connection with the "Evangelical Revival" of the 18th century.

My father was in his 25th and my mother in her 22nd year at the time of their marriage. My brother Leslie says of her that "Her most obvious characteristic, as I knew her, was a singular serenity, which indicated a union of strong affection and sound judgment, with an entire absence of any morbid tendencies." She did indeed, during her long life, enjoy without any break, a most rare degree of health, both of body and mind. Her characteristic serenity was the outcome, not only of this natural balance and sanity, but also of settled principle, and long and resolute practice for my father's sake. He stood peculiarly in need of the sunshine which she seemed unconsciously to diffuse, and which in later life had become a perfectly steady radiance. When apart,

they were accustomed to write to each other every day. My mother carefully preserved and gave to me every letter from him received during their married life of 45 years. I shall give extracts from these letters in their places; but of course it is only in reading the whole series that one can recognise the extraordinary freedom of the correspondence from any unkind or discontented word, as well as from anything unworthy of the highest aims revealed by some of them.

For the first seven years of their married life my father and mother had no child. During this time they took several holiday journeys on the Continent; and as they were not much separated the records of these years are scanty. A few extracts will, however, throw some light on the way in which the days passed. Even before their marriage he was employing more than one clerk; and business continued to increase until it began to cause severe pressure on his health. My mother has told me of the pang it used during these early years to cost her to obey his injunctions to awaken him at a fixed time after the hour or two of sleep for which he would sometimes come home in the course of a hard spell of work. All through his life, when in health, he enjoyed the power of taking sleep at will at any hour.

To his Wife

2nd Jan., 1816

". . . . . I have been all day at work for the negroes, and hope to be so to-morrow and Thursday. Hitherto I have not much mis-spent this year 1816."

. . . . . .

5th Jan., 1816

". . . . . It is a great disappointment to me, my blessed Jane, that I cannot keep my word about going to Harrow. My time is quite consumed with these African matters, and I feel that it would be very unjustifiable if I indulged myself at the expense of sacrificing the opportunities of contributing my pittance of aid towards these great interests. . . . . "

". . . . . As I write, I dictate to —— who sits by me, and therefore I hardly know what I write. . . . ."

12th June, 1816

". . . . . We were all thrown into confusion yesterday. The enemy, *i.e.*, the West Indians, had sent word that a battle was to be fought in the House of Commons with Wilberforce & Co. Therefore my father and I, and Zachary Macaulay and R. H. Inglis, and many other good and worthy men attended as bottle-holders. Yet no battle was really fought. Lord Castlereagh, who hates the subject, contrived to get it put off. . . . . "

16th June, 1816

". . . . . On Sunday I passed a very talkative evening at your aunt's with E—— and C——, purposely exerting myself to do you credit with your cousins by showing them that your husband was a tame animal, and could be a loquacious one. But all day long my heart was heavy, for I thought all day long of my own wife, whose heart I knew would be heavy, and whose time I feared would pass mournfully. . . . It cost me a great struggle not to do (what I was however clear was wrong)—that is, to travel on

Sunday, and during church time, to see thee. But they told me of the Sunday morning coach, and I should certainly, but for the clear conviction that there was nothing to justify such a violation of the laws of God, have travelled in it. As it is, you, my darling, will rejoice that I did not yield to the temptation. . . . ."

19th June, 1816

". . . . . My poor father is in my clerk's room at this moment in an agony of anxiety and alarm about his Registry Bill, which is to be discussed to-night. Never did I see or hear of so ardent a spirit as his is. Mine is unambitious, fond of repose. . . . ."

June, 1816

". . . . . I spend all the day at Westminster Hall, in Chancery Lane, and at Henrietta Street—the first is crowded and noisy, and full of evil-speaking, envy, and jealousy; the second is the scene of cares, responsibility and labour — distracting when visited by attorneys, and dismal when deserted by them; and the last is lonesome and dreary.* Yet . . . these things notwithstanding, mine is a life most happy when compared with that of the million, and substantially happy when I enumerate my enjoyments and blessings, and requiring constant watchfulness not to be seduced by the comforts which surround me, and not to grow unthankful to the kind Giver of them.

"Dearest Jane,—as I walked this morning from our house to this place, my mind was very deeply

* Henrietta Street was at this time their home, from which my mother was absent.

impressed with a sense of my own ingratitude. Doubtless He who is said emphatically to be Love places the happiness of His being in existing as the centre from which every blessing flows, and to which all the affections of all His rational creatures are to be directed. Wrapped up as our souls are in this present state within the "poor trappings of mortality," and holding as we do all our communications with other minds through the medium of sensible objects, it is probably the law of our nature that we should love our Creator only through the medium of those evidences of His bounty which surround us; that we should cherish our kindred as bestowed on us by Him, and our country as the sphere in which He has placed us; that we should pity the afflicted as His creatures, and love His servants because they bear that character.

"The Quietists, you know, thought that God was to be loved, not for what He has done, but for what He is, and that perfection consisted in an escape from all subordinate cares, a state of mind in which the worshipper might be said to have entered the holy of holies, and to have merged all social and all selfish affections in the one overwhelming omni-present emotion of love for the supreme source and object of every tender feeling. This was obviously an idle imagination. It was an attempt to realise in this world visions to which the fancy of the most contemplative, and the intellect of the most reflecting, of the children of men must ever fail to give even the semblance of truth and reality. Even in the revelation

of His will to His creatures, He has spoken only of His purposes, His laws, and His mighty works: and has said nothing of His nature or His essential qualities. And when He thought fit to exhibit to man His living presence, He veiled it under the semblance of human infirmity, that a palpable and distinct object might be held out to His creatures, towards which their affections might be directed. In some higher state we may make nearer approaches to a direct contemplation and immediate love of the Deity. Here, in the midst of sin and weakness, it is enough if we can trace the less distinct marks of His glorious perfections, and can love in His creatures the reflection of those attributes which belong to the Creator. . . . ."

8th July

". . . . . I have just received thirty Acts of *my* Colonies, which I did not look for; and I therefore count myself richer by ninety guineas than I expected to be. . . I have very serious thoughts of translating a long Latin poem *for you*. It will amuse me as I walk about London, and keep other cogitations out of my head, if it does no other good. If you give me any encouragement I shall certainly try it. I don't count myself to have any measure of poetry in me, nor even the love of poetry, as other people have it; but ever since I was a very little boy my ear was pleased with the rhythm of verse, and offended with a jarring line. Then, too, I have a great stock of words in my head, or rather a very exact recollection of all my stock; and I can arrange them without any

trouble, when my occasions require it. Upon these two foundations I build my hopes of being a very tolerable translator for your and my amusement. If I was to make a serious attempt at an original couplet, I should stumble shamefully; but I think either nature or habit has made me a passable rhymer. . . . ."

11th July 1816

". . . . . You think, I know, that about the concerns of the public I am a croaker, and that to care at all about the affairs of the commonwealth is as good a test of insanity as to care about the state of things in Georgium Sidus. However that may be, I own myself moonstruck, if that kind of anxiety is really an evidence of it. I think most decidedly that it is a very questionable matter whether Government will be able to pay the interest on the public funds next year; or, to bring the matter nearer home, whether they will be able next Christmas to pay what they will then owe. I assure you I shall think it a serious duty to provide accordingly by contracting not a shilling of any kind of debt, so that we might retrench to the uttermost without the miseries of any unsatisfied creditors calling upon us for money we might be unable to pay. . . . ."

[*No date or clue*]

"My dearest Jane,—To do good to those who say all manner of evil of us falsely, is one way of "working righteousness." I think, therefore, you had better take a coach, and come here to take leave, &c. I

much wish you to do this; so come in a coach, then I will go and look about the glass with you. You must come *immediately*. Ever thine, J. S. jun."

5th August, 1816

". . . . . Shall I tell thee a secret? It is that I begin to find you must come back to me. Home looks dull, and my mind feels dull, and my thoughts grow dull by living alone. I think, too, that solitude, when taken in such large draughts, is quite as bad as dissipation. Reading and castle-building, and anything and everything to get rid of myself are my continual occupation; and this dissipation is so far worse than social riot and intoxication, as it wears a semblance of greater wisdom and understanding. The real thing is domestic society. . . . ."

7th August, 1816

". . . . . It is a curious proof how little sentiment, *i.e.*, joy or grief unallied to sense, there is in this world, that the sorrows which relate exclusively to the heart (such as the postponement of a marriage on the eve of its celebration) have with most of us the air of ridicule. If we were alive to such feelings, and knew their poignancy, we should as soon think of laughing at a dropsical man as at a disappointed lover. . . . ."

13th April, 1819

". . . . . I am crowded all round with papers, and as a proof of it, I have just rejected a new client, on the plea of want of time. . . . ."

9th Oct., 1819

". . . . . I am very busy—words which I mean to have embroidered on my coat till we see Calais next, to save myself the trouble of repeating them. . . . ."

Yoxall Lodge, 1821

"On seeing more of Mrs ——, I do not find that she improves. I think she requires some considerable annoyance to show her off to advantage. She is then strung up to the proper pitch, and lets you see that her character has large resources;—but she relaxes into a sort of censorious gossip, which I cannot like, when she is at ease. . . . .

". . . . . I am heartily grieved about ——. Do not, however, reproach him . . . . . by word or deed—for censure never yet did good, except when it bore the shape of kindness. . . . ."

To Miss Venn

Lincoln's Inn, 28th May, 1822

". . . . . I hope you will soon come to Hampstead. It is very beautiful, fresh, and breezy. Jane enjoys it greatly, and F—— too; and though we are packed into less space than (all due allowance being made for our wants) two French gowns in a walnut shell, yet it must be a sad squeeze indeed where we could not find room to admit you, and where your all-enduring affection would not be content to come.

"I have many moments of deep anxiety. For many years past God has blessed us wonderfully, and the recollection of such kindness ought to excite hope, or

rather confidence—a confidence I mean that whatever may happen shall be well for us, bear whatever outward aspect it may. Yet I cannot but be anxious. I think of my own unworthiness—of my ingratitude—of the trials of so many how much better deserving of peace and happiness than I am; and although I endeavour to commit to the care of our merciful Creator the person who makes up so very large a proportion of all my earthly treasure—and though I comfort myself by thinking that the blessing of God is her birthright and inheritance—that she derives her title to it from the promise given to the children's children of those that fear Him, and has, I trust, some personal claim to the compassionate, merciful, and pardoning love of God, yet, when all this is said and thought over, anxiety and care will often take possession of my mind, and prove too strong for all the reflections I can oppose to them.

"Pray for us, dear Emelia, and keep all this to yourself, and accept it as a proof of the confidence I place in your regard and kindness. Jane herself is very cheerful, and I would not for the world do or say anything to cast a cloud over her mind.

"I am, always very affectionately yours

"J. S."

In September, 1822, my father's eldest child was born—Herbert Venn Stephen—whose death in 1846 was, I think, the great sorrow of his life. Another child, Frances Wilberforce, was born in 1824, and died before she was a year old. This loss also was

severely felt by my father, and it was on this occasion that my mother first had occasion to practise that self-mastery for his sake, through which she later acquired so rare a habit of quiet cheerfulness. "A quaint portrait" of our little sister, "in which she is represented with her elder brother in a bower of roses, is all that remains to commemorate her brief existence. For some time Herbert was an only child; and a delicate constitution made his education very difficult. My father hit upon the most successful of several plans for the benefit of his children when, at the beginning of 1829, he made arrangements under which Frederick Waymouth Gibbs * became an inmate of our family in order to give my brother a companion." Although this plan was changed three years later, Frederick Gibbs became and continued to be until his death in 1898, "a kind of adopted brother to us." A most happy and successful instance of adoption it proved. No real son and brother could have been more constantly and deeply affectionate to us all than he was through life.

"About this time a change took place in my father's position. He had a severe illness, caused, it was thought, by overwork. He had for a time to give up his Chancery business, and then to consider whether he should return to it and abandon the Colonial Office, or give up the bar to take a less precarious position now offered him in the office. His doubts of health and his new responsibilities as a father decided him. On January 25th, 1825, he was

* Afterwards tutor to King Edward VII. when Prince of Wales.

appointed Counsel to the Colonial Office, and on August 2nd following, Counsel to the Board of Trade, receiving £1500 a year for the two offices, and abandoning his private practice." [L.S.]

To his Wife

4th Feb., 1826

". . . . . I make it a rule, but do not always keep to it, to furnish myself in the morning with a text for meditation during the day. This day I fell on this—'The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.' I thought over it as well as I could whilst I walked this morning. . . . . ."

3rd October, 1826

"Last night I went to Hendon, after dining with Macaulay. There we had Tom, who talked like a cataract. . . . ."

23rd Oct., 1826

". . . . . I was sure that you would not dislike Comberton. I seldom praise you, so for a rarity I will say that no living being is better qualified than yourself to shed sunshine over what is naturally cold and dreary—not that I think Comberton so—but there are those who have that opinion . . . . .

"—— and his wife are coming to town. . . . . I declare that the tie of early affection is the most wonderful thing in this humdrum nature of ours. If that man were to be hanged for murder, I could not help feeling a deep regard for him at the foot of the gallows. . . . ."

Whitehall, 24th July, 1827

". . . . . That stupid fellow went off without seeing me . . . . . It is exceptionally provoking. If he were here I should be very angry with him, but distance of place quiets one like distance of time. . . . ."

To his Wife

Colonial Office,
13th February, 1828

". . . . . On the 1st January this year I resolved, by the assistance of God, to make it my business for the year to acquire a Christianity which should have more of Jesus Christ in it. . . . ."

16th Feb., 1828

". . . . . I dined yesterday with —— ——. I own it with reluctance, yet it is true, that the —— to whom I am attached exists more in my fancy than in reality. The very man, when I see and converse with him, is a very different sort of person from the man of whom (all faults notwithstanding) I always delight to think. Now this is not the case with you, or ——, nor with ——, nor ——; but in a certain sense and in a lower degree it is the case with almost everybody else that I love, that they look better when looming through the mists of my imagination than when seen close and clear. This is no fault of theirs, nor perhaps of mine either; nor would they care a rush if they knew the fact to be so.

"God bless you and my boy; may you be quite well soon. Oh me, how many are the thoughts

which a man must drive out of his mind to be happy! It is best to think only of the duty of the moment. . . . ."

In the Spring of 1829, my father bought a house in Kensington Gore (now 42 Hyde Park Gate,) in which he and my mother continued to live till 1840, and where my brothers Fitzjames and Leslie and I were born. "The Kensington of those days was still distinctly separate from London. A high wall divided Kensington Gardens from the Hounslow Road; there were still deer in the gardens, cavalry barracks close to Queen's Gate, and a turnpike at the top of the Gloucester Road. The land upon which South Kensington has since arisen was a region of market gardens, where in our childhood we strolled with our nurse along genuine country lanes." [L.S.]

He writes in 1829 to his cousin Alfred Stephen: ". . . . . The last 10 years of my life have been very busy ones, devoted not exclusively but mainly to promoting, as far as was compatible with the duties of my office, the extinction of slavery. This task devolved upon me by inheritance, and although I believe that nothing further remains for me to do, and that therefore my conscience is acquitted from all further solicitude on the subject, I should carry away from England a very heavy heart if I left that question under any degree of doubt. Supposing the government [of Van Diemen's Land] offered to me, the conditions upon which I should accept would therefore virtually be the being solidly convinced, either

that the slaves wanted no more aid, or that there was no longer any opportunity for me to be useful to them. A very few weeks will clear up the mystery."

. . . . . .

To his Wife

15th July, 1829

". . . . . I dined at Harrow yesterday. . . . . There was —— as usual, and Dr Longley, a man (as she observed, though, by the way, she did not express it so well) of whom it is impossible to speak without using the word 'pleasing,' which poor epithet is almost used up and worn out in his service. . . . . and an ugly looking man, who C. told me with a whisper, and a look of horror, was an infidel; so I am happy to forget his name. . . . ."

24th July

". . . . . It is well I did not go with my father this morning. On coming here I found a certain treaty (no matter with whom) which our Government is making, and which I had to put into form, and my absence to-day would have vexed two Cabinet Ministers much more than you would suppose men of that rank could be disturbed by anything done or omitted by me . . . . .

". . . . . Mind you make H—— observe [Mr Wilberforce] and try to fix in the dear child's mind some recollection of him. He may live to be as old as Mr W. himself without ever meeting any man whose image would be so well worth retaining."

To Miss Venn

2nd January, 1830

". . . . . I sometimes lecture H—— and F——, and sometimes play with them. I sing such songs to the baby as you ought to be most happy not to hear, and when the day is over, I go to rest with a sigh, as I remember how little difference the circumstance of my being alive makes to anybody (or scarcely to anybody) except the three or four people under this roof. It is something, however, to be going to rest at night with the assurance (the sincerity of which I shall not allow myself to doubt) that, as far away as Yorkshire, there is one person who thinks of me with interest. My egotism is exhausted. I might have despatched that topic more expeditiously, and with as much satisfaction to you, had I only said that my modes of life have undergone no change since you left us. What they were then you know sufficiently. . . . .

". . . . . Herbert falls short of perfection only because he is never naughty, and the babe is something more than perfect. He proves his taste by admiring and imitating my songs, and his filial piety by being very fond of me as long as I dance and play with him. He kicks and cuffs and bellows at the various crosses he meets with in life ; and thus shows his fraternal feelings by making up for his brother's want of impetuosity ; indeed, he has a much stronger will and a more impatient spirit than he has any hereditary claim to possess. Of Mrs F. [our nurse] I do not presume to say or to think anything which is not

profoundly respectful; of Mrs T. [the cook] the less I say the more I shall observe the great law of charity. My domestic circle is finished. . . . . Something I could write of M. T., but who would say anything unkind of so gentle and charitable a judge of her fellow-creatures, and why should you and I stimulate each other's affection for her (already I fear inordinate and excessive) by praises in which we could only repeat our ancient encomiums? Let us pass to higher matters. . . . ."

To Miss Venn

21st July, 1830

". . . . . I most earnestly wish that you would consult your own understanding (you could not commune with a better or a clearer) as to the wisdom and the duty of governing your feelings, and with that end of governing your thoughts and your lips. My dearest sister, I have more experience on that subject than I could or would impart to you, or to anyone. To prescribe to the mind a certain course of occupation for every moment of the day, and to command the tongue to be silent on all topics which produce useless agitation, is in the power of us all, and firmly to exercise that power for a very few days is the most certain restorative of inward composure and peace. . . . . ."

The next letter is one of a long series addressed to Henry Taylor (afterwards Sir Henry Taylor) who was at that time a clerk in the Colonial Office, and who became an intimate and dear friend of my father's.

To Henry Taylor

Ryde, I. of Wight,
7th Aug., 1830

"My dear Taylor,

"I am greatly obliged to you for your letter, and not the less so because I answer it with a borrowed pen. Weak eyes, disuse of my fingers, and the habit of dictation all drive me to use this liberty where I know that I shall not give offence. I will write to you about —— on Monday, for I wish to keep my temper now. I respect your diligence. I take a criminal delight in your satire, and have the utmost possible indulgence for your 'rough temper.' For I have been reading your manuscript again, and cheerfully acknowledge that a man who is capable of such things has a right to grumble over the daily drudgery by which he earns his bread. One of the few books which ornament my shelf here is a little edition of Cowley, to whom I am disposed to pay greater homage than is perhaps his due. Opening it just now, as your letter was lying by me, I was amused with the application which occurred to me of the scolding which he receives from his Muse in a little poem called 'The Complaint':

'When I resolved t'exalt thy anointed name
Among the Spiritual Lords of peaceful fame,
Thou changeling, thou, bewitched with noise and show,
Wouldst into courts and cities from me go;
Wouldst see the world abroad, and have a share
In all the follies and the tumults there;
Thou wouldst, forsooth, be something in a State,

And business thou wouldst find, and would'st create—
Business, the frivolous pretence
Of human lust, to shake off Innocence—
Business, the grave impertinence—
Business, the thing which I of all things hate—
Business, the contradiction of thy fate.'

I hope every line is a stab to you. For my own share I defy the Muses and all their reproaches, for no man living can accuse me of having ever plighted my troth, or of having broken any vows, to them. Except the before-mentioned volume of Cowley, and a very pretty collection of Religious Poetry, written for the most part in and before the reign of Elizabeth, for the importation of which into the Isle of Wight my wife is responsible, I have not a single couplet in print or in manuscript about me. My library consists of Hume's 'Laws of the Customs,' Hertslet's 'Commercial Treaties,' a volume of 'Calvin's Institutes,' 'Ludlow's Memoirs,' 'Barclay's Apology,' Bolingbroke's 'Remarks on English History,' 'Hoadley's Sermons,' and 'Luther's Commentaries on the Galatians'—a very religious catalogue I perceive, as I read the titles from the chimney-piece before me. But do not therefore accuse me of blowing a trumpet before me, for if my opinions and prejudices were precisely opposite to what they are, I should always read religious books when opportunity offered, as I find in none other such extraordinary subtlety of reasoning, so much habitual elevation of thought, and so thorough a sifting of all the questions which, whatever is to be our condition hereafter, have, even

with reference to our present state of existence, the most intense and durable interest. I do not believe that the whole range of literature has anything more admirable, or which better repays attention, than that mixture of earnest eloquence and metaphysical acuteness, which distinguishes the writings of the great Masters in modern theology—modern, I mean, as contra-distinguished from the Apostolical Fathers, of whom, alas, I know nothing but the names. One had need have some resource of the kind amongst these celebrated prospects, which I do not mean to disparage, having myself a reasonable share of satisfaction in them, and a genuine reverence for those who find in such things alone the materials of happiness. But mine is at bottom a Londonized, metropolitan taste, which delights more in reading of the impressions which Nature has produced on her real worshippers than in worshipping her in person. There is, however, much evil in yielding entirely to this propensity, and I trust that before the autumn has spent itself you will carry your mind down to Westmoreland, to be hauled over and repaired, as was the case with some of the great ships which I saw in Portsmouth harbour this morning. Your body will be all the better for the change. I declare to you that it sometimes occurs to me as an inexplicable phenomenon that, penned up as we are day after day in the same narrow fold, for months and years together, we, I mean not you and I, but the collective fraternity at Downing Street, do not lay aside all mutual goodwill, and good manners too, from

mere irksomeness of seeing the same faces and debating the same subjects. The conclusion is that we must be a very amiable and courteous set of persons. . . . ."

To his Wife

19th April, 1831

". . . . . I am to dine with Lord Goderich on Monday. Payment of labour in meat ought to be unlawful. . . . . The Reform Bill is going but awkwardly. I suspect the Ministry are tottering. . . . ."

20th April, 1831

"The Reform Bill is virtually lost, by a majority of eight against the Government. While I write, a Cabinet is sitting to determine whether the Government is to go out or not. I believe that they will go out, and I am heartily sorry so to think. But it is a great, silly, babyish world this, after all, and its changes are not worth half the thought they exact."

. . . . . .

22nd April, 1831

"As I write, the guns are firing to announce the arrival of the King at the House of Lords to dissolve the Parliament. He just passed this house, amidst the acclamations of the mob, who, ten years hence, will be clamouring for a new reform, and perhaps for the dethronement of his successors. Well—'the Lord God omnipotent reigneth,' and it does not really much matter what may occur in this short life; if all be bravely encountered, patiently endured, and wisely improved. . . . ."

27th April, 1831

". . . . . Electioneering is the pastime of everybody, and the business of a great many. Their anxiety annoys me. I cannot bring myself up to the right pitch. . . . . ". . . . . I declare I can't tell what to say next, so I may as well tell you that it is a coldish day, which information will be very useful to you to-morrow.

. . . . . .

"Dearest boys, may they keep better and grow well, and be blessed in soul and body. I wonder if anybody ever cared half as much about me as I do for them. I doubt it. . . . . ."

(*No date*)

"The world is gone mad. It is useless to enquire what is to happen, but it is difficult not to apprehend much and most formidable calamity on the earth. I find all folks hereabouts full of the dread of war and tumults. It can do no good, and give no pleasure to think on the subject."

8th May, 1832

". . . . . Here we are all at sixes and sevens. Lord Grey and the Chancellor have just gone to Windsor with the decision (whatever it may be) of the Cabinet; and the King is to determine whether the Government go out, or the House of Peers are to have forty, fifty, or sixty new members. They were beaten last night on a division, and have announced that they will not go on with the Reform Bill without some great change; so we are arrived at the edge of the precipice, for let the result be what it may,

nothing but distress and confusion now, and grievous evil hereafter, is to be expected. When I say nothing *but*, I mean only that the change must lead us through great evil to eventual good. But what do *you* care for such matters? . . . . .

". . . . . Had this miserable affair of the division not occurred, I should have tried to go to Leicestershire. As it is, I must stay, unless they keep in and make peers. Therefore, let us hope that the British peerage will be swamped by new coronets. If it gives me the advantage of a journey, will it not be compensation enough for the overthrow of the Constitution? . . . . ."

9th May, 1832

". . . . . I believe the Government are going out. . . . . I care very little about the matter, except as it may spoil the peace of the land; for as to *my* politics, one party is just as good and just as bad as the other. . . .

"P.S.—The Ministry have resigned, and the King has accepted their resignation. Lord Harrowby is to be Prime Minister if he likes it. A prodigy of folly his lordship will be if he does like it. It will end, I doubt not, in the return of the Duke of Wellington, and with him of all sorts of contests and disturbances. But what the ultimate end will be, the 'Northampton Mercury' himself could not tell you. Oh for the good old days of Sir Roger de Coverley back again! I fear that one ill consequence is quite clear—viz., that I must not be away from London for more than a day; for though I am not likely to have the Great Seals, yet it behoves me to look after our little share

in this great hubbub. Surely we had better go as Chief Justice to New Brunswick; only think of the sledges, and the farms I would buy for H—— and F—— !"

10th May, 1832

". . . . . Nothing known about the new Ministry. They talk of Sir Robert Peel as Prime Minister, and of Lord Ellenborough here. Alas and alas ! . . . . ."

10th or 11th May, 1832

". . . . . The news is that the House of Commons have petitioned the King to keep his old Ministers,—that the Duke of Wellington is Prime Minister ;—and that the House is dissolved. All this may be true or not, but I believe it is—that is, I believe the part about the dissolution is. The rest is sure enough. They say, but 'they' are apt to lie, that Lord Ellenborough —the worst possible person—is to come here. For myself and you and the dear boys I thank God I have no particular anxiety. That we are in imminent danger of losing a large part of our means, I cannot but believe ; but thank God we know how to be well off without many superfluities. For the country at large I am full of misgivings. It seems to me that we are given up to the dominion of reckless passions on all sides, and that it wears the aspect of extreme and fearful troubles. Oh pray for the peace of Jerusalem, will be words of more than common significance now. . . . ."

13th May, 1832

". . . . . I can hear nothing about the new Ministry. Reports change from hour to hour, and the last which

reached me was that the Duke of Wellington cannot get supporters, and is not expected to carry his point after all. . . . .

"There was a violent attack on the Bishop of Lichfield in St Bride's Church on Sunday. He was nearly pulled out of the pulpit, and escaped with difficulty. Another Bishop was ill-used at Camberwell. I hear of no riots, but of endless meetings; there is one at Kensington to-morrow. . . . .

"All the world is mad, and selfish and absurd and breaking to pieces. Go to. . . . ."

15th May, 1832

"The news of this evening is odd enough. The Duke of Wellington cannot make a Ministry, and Lord Grey is in office again. So ends this much ado about nothing. . . . ."

16th May, 1832

". . . . . The news here is, as far as I can make it out, that the King and Lord Grey are not yet quite agreed about the terms on which his lordship is to return to office. That Lord Grey *will* come back I do not doubt, but whether with a renewed agitation, or on quiet terms, is not so clear. We are in a sad scrape, as all people will be who have not taken counsel with either good understandings or solid principles of conduct. . . . ."

17th May, 1832

"All the fat is in the fire. No human being knows who is or who is not to be Minister—most likely Lord Grey, but that remains to be seen. . . . ."

18th May, 1832

"Nothing *yet* known about the Ministry. What a strange state of things. I am quite at a loss what to guess. The only remaining question is whether the King will give way with or without compulsion. It is a fearful crisis. . . . ."

21st Sept., 1832

". . . . . I knew you would feel with me that my duty to my father ought to silence every other thought. . . . The account leaves nothing more to hope for. He will ere long be with those who have lived holy lives, and died in the favour of their Maker. His life has been long, prosperous and happy, full of love to God and to man. . . . ."

My grandfather died on the 10th October, 1832. In the following year my father had a severe nervous illness, brought on by an extraordinary exertion in preparing, on extremely short notice, the measure for the final abolition of slavery. "He received notice to draw the Act on Saturday morning. He went home and completed his task by the middle of the day on Monday. The Act contains 66 sections, fills 26 pages in the octavo edition of the Statute Book, and creates a whole scheme of the most intricate and elaborate kind. The amanuensis to whom it was dictated used to tell the story as an illustration of his own physical powers. [L.S.]" This was, with one exception, the only occasion on which my father worked on a Sunday. The necessity was pressing, for, had the work not been

accomplished as it was, the measure could not have been passed in that Session, and slavery must have continued for another year.

To Henry Taylor

Colonial Office, Downing Street
12th July, 1833

"My dear Taylor,—Either Robert Southey without Miss Fenwick, or Miss Fenwick without Robert Southey, would be an attraction sufficiently powerful at any time to draw me from a much pleasanter place than this to a far less pleasant place than Cumberland, if I were at liberty to yield to my own inclinations. And if my health really required such a migration, I should esteem myself perfectly free to undertake it. But with regard to the state of my health, my wisdom is as perfect as that of Socrates, and consists in the profound conviction of my own absolute ignorance. It is impossible to reason to any purpose upon most insufficient premises, and in the face of one's own self-love and selfish apprehensions. My plan is, therefore, to abdicate on such occasions the government of my own affairs, and to place myself under the unmitigated authority of the best despot whom I can persuade, by an occasional guinea, to undertake the management of me. My present autocrat, after all the usual tests and probations, assures me, with the utmost confidence, that there is nothing seriously wrong. . . . . If I cannot do some good to the children of Ham, I shall never do any in my day, and might as well have been swamped in the general

deluge which their forefather so hardly escaped. Yet it is a serious loss to miss the opportunity of listening to the conversation of a man whose intellectual wealth probably surpasses that of all living men in our own country, excited, as he would be, to pour forth of the richest and best of his treasures by the society of a woman who, if you and Capt. Elliot be right, has all that intuitive wisdom of which the female mind only is capable, and which even amongst them is not reached until they have been first enamoured of the world, and then a little disgusted with it. The combination of shrewdness with a compassionate indulgence for their fellow-creatures which women of the highest order display after they have been long looking about them, is one of the most engaging studies for persons who, like you, are curious about the varieties of human character. I have no doubt that, under some heathenish name, you have by you some whole-length pictures, and a multitude of sketches, of Miss Fenwick: for taking which she would be perfectly entitled to box your ears, if she knew what you had been about. . . . ."

To his Wife

23rd July, 1833

". . . . . It was well I came, as I found them all in full cry after me. I fear that this business will last longer than I expected: but here I am, doing my duty; and that is, or should be, enough to satisfy me.

"I long to be with you again, but I will try to suppress all such idle longings. . . . ."

24th July, 1833

". . . . . I saw Mr Wilberforce this morning. He is very feeble. I do not think he can live more than a few months; but he is cheerful, as he ought to be. . . . . "

25th July, 1833

". . . . . This unhappy Slavery affair drags on most heavily; but my presence this time is really essential, which is so far a comfort.

". . . . . T. Macaulay has behaved very nobly. The cause itself gets on unaccountably, but whether well or ill I am scarcely able to say. . . . . "

26th July, 1833

". . . . . Yesterday I was at the House of Commons morning and evening, and expect to be there again this evening. The Bill creeps, but it does move . . . Meantime there is a new defeat of the Government in the House of Lords, and new fears of a resignation of Ministers, and new reason to dread postponements of the Slavery Bill. All this is most provoking, but it is of no use to be out of temper. . . . .

"Mr Wilberforce is very poorly. I do not think he can last long."

27th July

". . . . . If I went to Sea View to-day . . . . I must either be up two nights following in the mail, or desert my post at the end of the affray. The consequence is that I must remain where I am. This is a great vexation, almost fit to be called a trial; but there is no help for it. . . . . "

29th July, 1833

"This morning, at two o'clock, Mr Wilberforce died. I dined with him on Saturday. He was then ill, and went to bed immediately after dinner. He never rose from it, but without much suffering sank under one of his usual fits.

"I have been all this morning in the House of Commons, and must be there again this evening. The Bill moves most slowly. I even yet am at a loss to know when to count on seeing you. . . . ."

30th July, 1833

". . . . . I have but a moment to say that I am (thank God) well, but so hurried with poor Mr Wilberforce's affairs, etc., that I have really only time to say—God bless you all. . . . ."

31st July, 1833

". . . . . I expect that Mr Wilberforce will be buried in Westminster Abbey, attended by both Houses of Parliament, on Saturday next. I am dreaming of seeing you on Sunday.

". . . . . I agree with you that this was a not unhappy event. . . . ."

1st August, 1833

"To tell how and about what I have been engaged all day would be to write a very tiresome volume. Undertakers—Peers—Commons—Westminster Abbey—Slavery Bill, etc. However, I will not grumble. . . . ."

To Henry Taylor

11th August, 1833

". . . . . I trust that amidst the silence of colonial politics you are listening to a different inspiration, with greater earnestness and attention than was possible in busier days. It is your own fault if you pass through life without establishing a name, of which your descendants (should you have any) would boast.

"I am occupied in official business some hours daily from duty; with theology from choice; and with sailing about this strait, with my belongings, for amusement. A Patriarch of my standing has no right to expect, and is unwise if he wishes for, any more intoxicating occupations of his time. It would not, indeed, be easy for me to be frivolous at present, even if frivolity were as much my besetting sin as I suppose it to be the reverse; for I am carrying about with me daily and hourly the vivid recollection of the inestimable friend I have lost;* which, though it produces no sadness, infalliby renders me serious. I long to write, though I know I never shall, an account of that admirable and most singular person. He was distinguished from the rest of mankind by his extreme susceptibility to every mode of pleasurable thought and feeling. I opened in Coleridge the other day (by the bye I am much indebted to you for those volumes) on a line which expresses his nature to perfection, as far as it goes—'Delight in little things, the buoyant youth surviving in the man.' His power of extracting joy out of everything rendered his piety a spring

* Mr Wilberforce.

of incessant gladness to himself, and a most bewitching charm to all who witnessed its exercises. It became a master passion, to which all other affections and every lower appetite were completely subjugated; but it was that kind of subjection which left room for a well-regulated freedom. The result was a sort of filial confidence in the kindness of God, which permitted, and even encouraged, something not quite dissimilar from the light-hearted frolic which it is my greatest happiness to see my children enjoying in my company, and under such parental control as I am obliged to use. But there is no end of this kind of writing: although there is an end of my leisure at this moment, for be it known to you that we are all going to dinner, and that I have been dictating this (to borrow from a friend of mine) in order to soothe the pangs of gazing at a yet uncovered table-cloth. . . ."

To Henry Taylor

". . . . . My course of life has led me into occupations which on the whole have been agreeable to me. I have in return received an income adequate to all my wants, wishes, and whims. And above all, I have enjoyed the satisfaction of knowing that my exertions have been contributing to the success of an object of extreme importance to the happiness of mankind, for which my father, and my connections and friends have been living almost exclusively.

" With these views of the case, it seems to me that upon the whole I have much more cause for self-gratulation than for any other feeling on the score

of my connection with the Government. I do not affect to doubt that I might, in another walk of life, have attained to greater wealth and distinction. . . . . But I look to the right and the left, and compare my condition with that of those of equal or greater pretensions, and am constrained to conclude that, whatever prospects I may have abandoned, or whatever neglect I may have received, I am, upon the whole, well off. To be contented and quiet is meritorious only when restlessness would answer no good end, or when the struggle would probably not yield fruits sufficient to compensate for the annoyance attendant upon it. I am unwilling to disturb my own repose by efforts to improve my condition, not because, as matters stand, it is quite to my mind, for there is much annoyance connected with it at present; but because I discover no definite object of a public nature at which I could aim; and fear, therefore, that if I should throw myself into a ferment, I should be like a man in a becalmed ship: have all the rocking and heaving to bear without making any approach to a welcome haven.

"Something, and not a little, is to be taken into account in reference to parental and other domestic feelings. I begin to live in a new generation, and to transfer much of my selfishness to those who are, I trust, to follow me. Had I been a far more ambitious man than I ever was, my solicitude by this time would have been much more directed to the advancement of my boys than to my own. If for their sakes I could wish to be a more considerable member of society,

yet on the other hand, the hope, or the dream, that they may hereafter attain honourable distinction, goes far to reconcile me to my own obscurity. Nor will I shrink from avowing that, as life advances, the impression of the vanity of its honours is continually becoming deeper, and the anticipation of a future existence more vivid. On the whole, therefore, I am strongly inclined to the conclusion that my external circumstances offer me as much enjoyment as is really attainable, and as much as I ought to desire to attain. . . . ."

To Henry Taylor

Kensington Gore, 3rd Nov., 1833

"My dear Taylor,—Anxious as I am, even to an unreasonable degree, for your good opinion, yet this expression of it, however kindly and generously intended, has awakened a deeper sense of shame and regret than the keenest rebuke could have excited. The moral superiority which your conduct ascribes to me, still more emphatically than even your words, I have never claimed, simply because it does not belong to me. If you should think that I say this in the hope of earning the additional praise of more than common modesty, you would do me injustice. Weighing my own character against that of other men, in those scales which the Prophet calls 'the balance of the Sanctuary,' where an accurate allowance is made for natural temperament and infirmities, and for the influence of parental and other examples, the result is to fasten upon me convictions

of which I will only say that they render any self-applause at the expense of my neighbours impossible. I believe, indeed, that I have too often been diverted by these feelings from the performance of the duties I owe to my friends and associates. When witnessing conduct or language which my heart has condemned, it has appeared to me preposterous that the condemnation should be pronounced by *my* lips in the language of reproof. On the occasion to which you refer, I may more than once have been controlled and silenced by this habitual self-misgiving. Yet it is a very singular thing, that just before your note was put into my hands, I had been confessing to my amanuensis, from whom I have no secrets, that I owed to you and to —— an apology, which I had resolved to make, for having been hurried by the current of conversation to quote the witty, though profane rebuke to the profaneness of Lord Thurlow. My heart had reproached me for making that allusion, not only because it was irreverent, but because it might have induced some of you, my juniors in age, to suppose me insensible to the duty of abstaining from all light mention of the sacred name, or mysterious purposes, of the Almighty. You see, therefore, that we have to interchange confessions, and that I have as much to be forgiven as to forgive.

"Although it would be easy for me to write a volume on the general subject of the restraints which religion should impose on the tongue, or rather on the heart, I see no adequate motive for writing even a solitary sentence, because I fear we

differ about the first principles of all. As that is a subject which I think you are unwilling to agitate, so I am not disposed to obtrude it upon you. What your opinions may be I can only conjecture. My own, not lightly taken up, nor adopted at all without an incessant conflict with constitutional scepticism, are that the religion of Jesus Christ affords the only plausible solution of the great mystery of human life, and the only solid foundation for any lofty or consolatory thoughts, and that unless the silence prevailing between man and all intelligences superior to his own has really been broken by the voice of inspiration, the Christian graces of faith and hope and charity have no place in this world of ours, but must be superseded by the antagonist vices of sensuality, despondency, and selfishness. She whose pen I am using well knows how deeply grateful I have ever felt towards you for a demeanour full of indulgence, kindness, and generosity. Would to God (the aspiration is hers as fully as my own) that I could repay that obligation by inducing you to apply your great reasoning powers to the study of the only subject which a wise man can regard as of much moment, and to bring the imaginative and meditative faculties with which you have been so richly endowed to that topic from which alone inferior interests can derive real purity or grandeur. But I forbear to pursue considerations which might lead me beyond the limits of sound discretion. May God bless you!

"I am ever sincerely yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

To Miss Venn

23rd November, 1833

". . . . . The hostility it has been my lot to encounter has always tended to awaken in me a sort of morbid self-esteem, but I could find it in my heart to run away and hide myself in some remote land from the too favourable regards of the few who love me.

"Well, well! as long as you and I are fellow-travellers through this world of shadows, may you never see me in any other lights than those with which your generous affection invests me. . . . ."

CHAPTER II

1834—1839

KENSINGTON GORE

Letters to Henry Taylor, Miss Venn, Miss Thornton, Sir T. F. Buxton, T. Babington, T. E. Dicey, Miss Macaulay, Mrs Austin, Henry Venn, Mrs Hodson

To Henry Taylor

Colonial Office, Downing Street
4th July, 1834

"My dear Taylor,—Elliot has just shown me your note, sounding the loud timbrel in echo to all the sackbuts, dulcimers, and all kinds of music which your critics are ringing in your ears. I was pretty much ashamed of the Jew's-harp with which I struck into the concert,—that is the truth of it. But I have long since come to the conclusion that a man who will not very often do what he is ashamed of, will never do anything to be proud of.

". . . . . If I were not growing an old man, I should certainly betake myself to the formation of a style for the transfusion, in the most pleasing and effective way I could, of my thoughts into other men's heads. But what matters it in what phrases one addresses the Right Honourable Spring Rice, or the Right Honourable Poulett Thompson? My present patchwork vehicle will continue to serve my purposes well

enough, being made up of the precision of a special pleader, embellished with antitheses, and a Johnsonian rumbling. I protest, I think it almost too good for the base uses to which all my mental progeny are destined.

"I was not, I believe, quite sincere in controverting Lockhart's theory about the elements of which 'Van Artevelde' is composed. But I spoke with perfect truth in saying . . . . . the great merit of the character consists in its depths, and recesses, and dark places; and in its capability of suggesting various explanatory theories—or, in other words, in the close relationship it bears to human nature in a very peculiar and refined form indeed; but so refined as rather to have deepened than obliterated any of the great characteristics of man as he actually is. Now this is very high praise, which you fully deserve. . . . .

". . . . . I think you have succeeded in establishing a wide, an honest, and an enduring fame; and I am glad of it, sincerely and heartily. Only remember that Burns was a good exciseman, and that Wordsworth is eminent as a stamp distributor; and therefore do not let your Poetship snort and grow saucy over the humdrums of correspondence with Smith of Barbadoes or Smythe of Guiana. Thus ends a gratulation, one, I am sure, of a multitude, but I hope not from the warmest of your friends and admirers, by many—because on that supposition you must be very rich in both.

"I am, my dear Taylor

"Most truly yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

To his Wife

14th July, 1834

"The newspapers say, and I suppose truly, that Lord Melbourne is to form a Ministry; which means that the extreme members of the present Government, Brougham, Spring Rice, Grant, and perhaps Lord Althorpe, are to stay in, with an accession of Whigs of a deeper dye than Lord Grey. Now I hate, abhor, loathe, detest, abominate and execrate writing political letters or reading them, especially to you; so if you please, the Ministry we will let hang or drown themselves as they see best. . . . ."

To Henry Taylor

16th Nov., 1835

". . . . . I quite agree with you that with a view to deliberative, far-sighted, and to use once more the much-injured word, philosophical Government, we should have studious and speculative men; standing aloof from mere despatch writing, and projecting schemes of comprehensive and remote good. But, sound and correct as all this is in theory, I do not know my alphabet better than I know that this is not the spirit of the English Government, and that the ambition of every Secretary of State and his operations will be bounded by the great ultimate object of getting off the mails. The speculator in a garret will cast his pearls before swine. He will give up his speculations to mix in the active scene around him, and will be ere long converted into an addition

to the already formidable number of persons who jostle each other as competitors for intellectual employment in the despatch writing line.

"I do not refer to Mr Spedding especially, although I am quite sure that when the ambition of his nature, which is not dead but merely asleep, shall be roused by the stimulus of public employment, he will not only claim, but obtain for himself in twelve months a position second to that of no person under this roof in respect of the amount and nature of his active service, and will at last merge in obscure drudgery talents qualifying him for a very high station amongst the political or literary aristocracy of his age. . . . ."

". . . . . What I have thus undertaken I shall perform to the best of my ability, but with a conviction continually increasing in strength that any exercise of authority over a group of persons who are penned up from day to day like so many sheep in a fold must subject the Pastor to many a rough assault, and call on him to arm himself with an indifference to the feelings of those about him, which it is not in my nature to acquire. . . . ."

To Miss Venn

3rd February, 1836

"If there is any faith in Governments, I *am* an Under Secretary of State. . . . . Philosophy, apathy, the consciousness of advancing years, a temper not very ambitious, and not a little disposed to be awe-struck;—these, and fifty other such elements of

thoughts and feelings as these, blend together on the arrival of any success in life, and repeat the chime of 'vanity of vanities,' without my being sent to a higher source for it; but when I think where and by whom that legend was written on all that we either attain or desire, oh dear! oh dear! what a poor business does my Under Secretary of Stateship and my £2000 of annual income appear—but not so, dearest E——, the love of you all at Hereford. The deeper I plunge into these worldly cares, the deeper does the value of that love sink into my heart, and the more delightful appears the prospect (when I *can* indulge it,) that when these cares are over I shall be with you all, if not in the evening of life, yet perhaps in the dawn of eternity. If I were an apostle, how fervently could I pronounce over my friends at Aylstone Hill the apostolic benediction of 'Grace, mercy, and peace, be with you all,'—but what have these Government offices to do with that sacred office? I much more need the interposition of your and J——'s and C——'s and your Aunt's supplications on my behalf, for I am still on a slippery place, and am whirling about, mentally and bodily.

"Ever dearest E—— most affectionately yours

"J. S."

To Miss Thornton

1st April, 1837

". . . . . At home I have no longer the company of my two boys, but while my schoolfellows are nursing their grandchildren, I am playing with a daughter

only just old enough to have bestowed her affections for the first time on a doll. My life will never be the prey of a biographer, and is not worth an autobiography. But if that series of small events through which I have been passing should ever be made the subject of a true and faithful history, it would show how many blessings may be accumulated on one man's head. What more it would prove, I value your regard too much to tell you. . . . ."

To Sir T. F. Buxton

[*No date*]

"When I look on the last 24 years of my life, all of which have been passed either in the Colonial Office or in a close official connection with it, I cannot but be thankful for the innumerable opportunities which have been afforded me of contributing to the mitigation, if not the prevention, of the cruel wrongs which our country has inflicted on so large a portion of the human race. The retrospect awakens other and less agreeable thoughts, which, as they relate to myself, I may as well keep to myself. But now that life has passed its meridian, and the shadows are growing longer, I can truly say that there is no other situation which could have been assigned to me, which, if the choice were now to be made, I should so deliberately prefer and so gratefully accept. Your own more conspicuous and public career has been attended with far more momentous results. As there is very little disparity between our ages, so it is

not improbable that our labours may reach their close at nearly the same period. I shall lay down my weapons, whenever that time may come, with a fervent hope that they may be taken up by some successor who, inheriting my own views, may have greater power to carry them into effect; but so long as I retain my position, may this right hand forget its cunning if I am faithless to the cause to which your life and the lives of our departed friends have been devoted. . . . ."

To T. Babington

Brighton, Oct., 1837

". . . . . I hope before many weeks to receive Mr Wilberforce's Life, which his sons are passing rapidly through the press. It is hardly possible that they should avoid disappointing expectation, but I have a very sanguine hope that the book will be a good one. I have read a great deal of it in MS. with great interest. He now forms one of a large circle of your friends and my own who are united in a far nobler society than that to which they belonged when we knew them; although I think it would have been difficult to find any social circle more worthy of respect and love than that of which Mr Wilberforce was the centre. I think with deep gratitude and affection of many of its members, Henry Thornton, Bowdler, and others who are gone, yourself, Macaulay, Gisborne and some few more who remain. Although you and they are now much withdrawn from any society except that of your own households, I rejoice in the certain conviction that an unbroken peace and

tranquillity have taken the place of the more animated pursuits of former days, and that you are full of comfort, whether your views are directed to the journey which you have passed or to that which awaits you. Yet your path has not been altogether through smooth places. On the contrary, I know few men who have been called to greater exercise of faith and patience, and none who has borne them with greater steadfastness of mind.

"My wife joins with me in the sincere wish and earnest prayer that every blessing may rest upon Mrs Babington and yourself which is compatible with the greatest of all blessings, that of being made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. That is a Scriptural phrase which is rivetted in my mind by the glowing and solemn manner in which I heard it repeated by Mr Wilberforce on one of the last occasions I ever conversed with him; and it occurs to me the more readily now in writing to you, as I recollect that about the same time he spoke of you in terms of affectionate regard such as I never heard him use of any other human being. . . . ."

To his Wife

". . . . . I see nobody, I hear of nobody—I have nothing to do, to say, or to think of, but Canada."

. . . . . .

Colonial Office
5th Dec., 1837

"It was quite time for me to be at my post. We have a Canadian rebellion on hand, or the very next thing to it, with many other ills. . . . ."

8th Dec., 1837

". . . . . Oh Canada! what wrongs have I done thee that thou thus pursuest me in my house and my office, my walks and my dreams? . . . . ."

In 1838 my father contributed to the "Edinburgh Review" the first of the series of articles afterwards published by him under the title of "Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography." Of these essays my brother Fitzjames says, in the biographical notice already mentioned—"The composition of the essays . . . . . was almost the only relaxation their author enjoyed for many years. He used to write them early in the morning and late at night, or during the occasional holidays which his official occupation afforded. These holidays were, however, very uncommon. For many years he never left London for a month together, and though this was not the case during the last five years of his official life, he transacted business during the summer in the country, with exactly the same regularity as in London. It may therefore fairly be said that the essays must not be supposed to give the full measure of the powers of their author. They merely show the amount of literary exertion of which he was capable, whilst the powers of his mind were principally directed to other pursuits." To this my brother Leslie adds—"I will not express any critical judgment of their qualities, but this I will say: putting aside Macaulay's Essays, which possess merits of an entirely different order, I do not think that any of the collected essays republished from the 'Edinburgh Review'

indicate a natural gift for style equal to my father's. Judging from these, which are merely the overflowing of a mind devoted to other most absorbing duties, I think that my father, had he devoted his talents to literature, would have gained a far higher place than has been reached by any of his family."

This is perhaps the best place in which to quote the account given by my brother Fitzjames of the official duties from which my father sought occasional relaxation in the lighter occupation of literature.

"The position," he says, writing in 1860, "which Sir James Stephen occupied in the Colonial Office was a very singular one. The British Colonies are a collection of many separate States, of every degree of importance, from nations like Canada and New South Wales down to the rock of Heligoland, inhabited by a few Germans. The authority of the Crown over these dependencies differs in its origin, its extent, and its limitations. It has to be applied to very different objects, and to populations differing not merely in race, in religion, in law, and in language, but in all other respects, by which the Cingalese, the Caffres, the New Zealanders, and the Hottentots are distinguished from the English settlers of Canada and Australia, the Dutch Boers of the Cape, the French of the Mauritius, and the mongrel populations of Malta, Gibraltar, and the Ionian Islands. In some of these communities the Crown exercises, through the Secretary of State for the Colonies, powers of the most extensive kind; others, as Canada and New South Wales, are independent in all but name; and

others are, or during Sir James Stephen's tenure of office were, mere infant settlements, dependent, to a great extent, on the central government for the very simplest elements of civil society. To know exactly what were the powers and rights of the English Government in respect of each of these communities, to know the history of all the relations between the United Kingdom and each of its dependencies, and to be able to give an account of the state of parties and local politics in every one of them, was one part of what was required of the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. There was hardly any kind of political question upon which he was not bound to be able to advise the parliamentary head of the department when the occasion arose, for the successive Secretaries of State of necessity laboured under a deficiency of special knowledge which it was his duty to be prepared to supply.

"It was also his duty to prepare the drafts of almost all the more important despatches, and of the numerous Acts of Parliament which were required by every colony in turn. Upon subjects which were but little understood by the public at large, and which excited but little general interest, this task was often hardly distinguishable from that of government and legislation, and it would perhaps be difficult to mention any man of his generation who could claim the title of a legislator with more justice than Sir James Stephen.

"The understanding upon which the permanent offices in the Civil Service of the Crown are held is

that those who accept them shall give up all claim to personal reputation on the one hand, and shall be shielded from personal responsibility on the other. Though Sir James Stephen was at one time the object of the most bitter personal attacks (often for measures to which he had opposed all the resistance in his power) he never complained of this compact, and his family have no wish to claim for him a reputation which he never thought of claiming for himself. It matters little now what share he individually took in the great questions which, during his tenure of office, arose between the United Kingdom and the colonies. Praise or blame can neither affect him nor change the opinion which those who knew him best entertained of him; but without attempting to lift the veil with which official life must of necessity cover those who enter upon it, it may be said that it fell to his lot to assist in two of the most remarkable transactions even of this century. The first was the abolition of slavery, the second was the establishment of responsible government in Canada. With each of these, and indeed with all other public transactions with which he was concerned, he was connected in the same way. He prepared the measures which others advocated, and furnished many of the arguments and much of the information which they employed. He had, in addition to this, the wearisome and laborious task of superintending the detailed application of the principles which the legislature had established. This was generally a very tedious and most unpleasant process. The controversies which

arose with the provincial legislatures of the various West Indian Islands in relation to the arrangements required by the abolition of slavery were as bitter as they were obscure; and the relations between this country and Canada were confused and entangled in every possible way by personal and party questions at home, and by the violent dissensions which existed in Canada itself. The difficulty of the transaction of all this business was aggravated by the fact, that though great weight was attached to Sir James Stephen's opinion and advice by his official superiors, and though he held strong opinions of his own upon the subjects which came before him, he had no real authority whatever. The principles which he always advocated ultimately obtained complete recognition, but he was constantly obliged to take part in measures which he regretted, and of which he disapproved."

From such fragmentary records as are within my reach, I gather that the chief ground of the attacks on my father, which were so often repeated, in Parliament and elsewhere, was that he was too powerful in the Colonial Office. I suppose that the "compact" referred to above by my brother was not, in my father's time, fully worked out. He certainly seems to have been attacked by name for Colonial Office proceedings in a way which, at the present time, would be thought quite out of the question in regard to the holder of such an office as his. This will appear more clearly from some of the following letters:

To T. E. Dicey

1838

". . . . . I do not know what possesses me at all to be writing upon any other subjects than those which engross my mind at the present moment, when I am scarcely twenty-four hours off Sir Wm. Molesworth's impeachment,* in which I hear from Charles Buller, a great friend of Sir William's, that I am to have a conspicuous share. I am, it seems, at your service, a rapacious, grasping, ambitious Tory. On two unequal crutches propped he came, Glenelg's on this, on that Sir G. Grey's name; and it appears that by the aid of these crutches I have hobbled into a dominion wider than ever Nero possessed, which I exercise like another Domitian. What a thing it is to see oneself as others see one. I protest I had mistaken myself for a kind of philosophical Whig, piquing myself upon my exemption from the servile adoption of any party opinions or feelings, unambitious withal, loving employment partly for its own sake, partly for the sake of the money it procured me; but as indifferent about the possession of power, either in reality or in appearance, as most men; and if I had had to write down my own demerit as a public man, it would have been not the excess but the deficiency of self-assertion. However, I am bound to believe that I am a very desperate fellow

* Sir Robert Peel writes (12th February, 1838):—"Sir William Molesworth, the Radical member for Leeds, has just given notice of a motion for an address to the Crown, praying for the removal of Lord Glenelg, on account, I presume, of his conduct in respect of Canada."—"Life of Sir R. Peel," by C. S. Parker; Murray, 1899.

after all; and if Sir William does not get the better of me, (of which I seriously think he has a very fair chance,) the young man who is going to the Colonies from Rugby had better be on his guard, or he will find my sceptre a whip of scorpions when compared with Dr Arnold's birch. I can assure you, however, that this is anything but a jesting matter to me, and to my friends at the Colonial Office; and, though you had better not let Sir William know it, I shall be heartily glad if we get well out of the scrape. If the Tories should happen to support him, as they very possibly may, and the Government is broken up by reason of the imputed maladministration of the Colonies, I shall request you to look me out a small house at Brighton, commensurate with my reduced fortunes. Jane says this is all croaking; but if the whole grove were full of whistling and chirruping without a bass accompaniment from ravens and rooks, why, sir, the harmony of Nature would be destroyed, and the symphonies of creation interrupted. *Vide* 'Rambler,' or any other part of Johnson, *passim*—and so farewell.

"Ever affectionately yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

To Miss Macaulay

6th May, 1838

"My dear F——,—I know not how to grieve for the loss of your father; though it removes from the world one of the oldest and assuredly one of the most excellent friends I have ever had. What rational man

would not leap for joy at the offer of bearing all his burdens, severe as they were, if he could be assured of the same blessed reward? He was almost the last survivor of a noble brotherhood, now reunited in affection and in employment as in society. Mr Wilberforce, Henry Thornton, Babington, my father, Mr Venn, Bowdler and other not less dear though less conspicuous companions of his many labours, have ere now greeted him as associates in the world of spirits; and above all, he has been welcomed by his Redeemer with 'Well done, good and faithful servant.' What remains for us but to mourn our infirmity and to labour to render it less; to set before us his example, to cultivate his benevolence, submission and faith; and while we yet continue in this state of probation, to promote mutual affection by every office of kindness and of love? God bless you and dear Tom, and all the rest of your family, and may he soon be here to cheer and support you."

To his Wife

(Amongst letters of 1838)

No date

". . . . . 1st August—the day of final emancipation.* Thank God that I have lived to see this catastrophe. In my sorry way I have worked for fifteen years to bring it about, and have been well paid for my work. No thanks to me. But my poor father, how would he have rejoiced.—J.S."

* The Apprenticeship system expired 1st August, 1838.

15th August

"I am bothered,—I have been bothered,—I shall be bothered, with business; and so you may conjugate the whole verb.

"Nothing new.—J. S."

14th September

". . . . . My news is all public, and not worth telling."

. . . . . .

19th September

". . . . . The only novelty is that Lord G. has left London, and I reign over our Colonies in solitary grandeur. 'My ancient solitary reign.'—J. S."

To Mrs Austin

Kensington Gore
12th February, 1839

"Being unwilling to answer your note by a Downing Street amanuensis, and having very little use of my own pen, I have postponed writing to you until I could have the assistance of my own Secretary of State, with whose autograph I believe you are very familiar. Lord Glenelg's resignation is, as you may well suppose, a sad subject with me. He is the tenth Secretary of State under whom I have served, and from the most certain knowledge I can declare that of the whole of that long list he is the most laborious, the most conscientious, and the most enlightened Minister of the public. He is my intimate personal friend, and in all my intercourse with mankind I have never known a man so amiable, guileless and true. For four years together I have been passing some

hours daily with him, with a few occasional intervals, in an intercourse the most perfectly free and unrestrained, and throughout the whole of that time I have never heard him utter one unkind word of any human creature. I have never detected in him one disingenuous or indirect motive. I have never found him insensible to the merits, or severe to the failings, of any one of the multitude of persons who have served under him. A certain natural dignity and gentleness of nature may have rendered all this so easy to him as to deprive him of the praise of much self-denial,—praise however which, as it implies a condemnation, is hardly to be coveted except by those upon whom the corruptions of our common nature press heavily. The praise is just in proportion to that pressure. I lament Lord Glenelg's retirement little, if at all, on his own account, and had it been brought about in a less offensive manner I should have congratulated him upon it. His real and only unfitness for public life arises from the strange incompatibility of his temper and principles with the tempers and with the rules of action to which we erect shrines in Downing Street. Even as it is, I sincerely rejoice that the evening of his life will be devoted to duties, studies, and contemplations the most foreign to that turbulent region, and which, though of inestimable worth, would I fear be utterly distasteful and offensive to the great majority of his late colleagues. But I perceive that I am forgetting the example of his long-suffering and charity, and am in great danger of inflicting a great deal too much of my tediousness upon you. . . . ."

To Henry Venn

Downing Street, 3rd April, 1839

"My dear Henry,—Many thanks for your letter. . .

". . . . . Never fear for me, or for any annoyance which can befall me in consequence of these attacks. It is not an affectation, but the very simple truth that there is no possible evil which could result from them, which would seriously disturb my tranquillity. If I were twenty years younger, I dare say that I should be less quiet in the contemplation of prospects which they appear to open. But as it is, I am perfectly content, whenever the occasion shall arise, to abide the worst that can happen. I have passed a life which is now in its wane in the uninterrupted enjoyment of the best temporal gifts of Providence, and it would be criminal and irrational to disturb myself at the prospect of some of the least important of them being withdrawn, for amongst the least important of all I deliberately consider the possession of wealth, a place of honour, and a connection with the great men of the political world. So never fash yourself about me. . . . ."

To his cousin, Mrs Hodson

18th April, 1839

"My dear Mary,—I am sincerely grateful for your kind solicitude about me. I can most sincerely assure you that I do not care a rush for ——'s or for ——'s attacks on me. I hope that my friends and a large number of strangers will remember that the assault

is made on a man whose hands are bound. I could defend myself only by a disclosure of the share I have taken in the proceedings which he condemns, and by pointing out which of them were taken without my concurrence, or in opposition to my opinions. I would much rather bear ——'s censure than I would imitate his example. If he betrays official confidence in order to vilify me, I will not commit a similar treachery in order to defend myself. Yet, if any attack is made upon me in Parliament my defence is ready to be produced there, for this would alter my position. In the meantime I say with Don Quixote in the cave of Montesinos, 'Patience, and shuffle the cards.' I could quote deeper maxims from far higher sources; but in this world of real calamities and bitter trials, it would be absurd to allow the stings of a few wasps to rise in imagination into the form of a calamity demanding succours which are reserved for the graver troubles of this mortal state. So peace be with my enemies; a wish not wholly unmixed with selfishness, as it may contribute to my own peace. . . . ."

CHAPTER III

1840—1845

BRIGHTON—WINDSOR

Letters to H. V. Elliott, J. F. Stephen, Miss Venn, Macvey Napier, Mrs Austin

IN the year 1840, my brother Leslie, then a child of seven years old, showed signs of so much delicacy of health, that it was thought necessary for him to be at once sent to school at Brighton; but the physician who urged this step added that he ought not to be sent as a boarder, but that arrangements should, if possible, be made for his attending as a day scholar and living at home. My father immediately altered all his arrangements; let the house at Kensington Gore, in which he and my mother had taken so much pleasure for eleven years: and took a furnished house for us at Brighton: he himself going into lodgings in London, and coming down to Brighton from Saturday, or sometimes Friday, till Monday. This was the beginning of a long period (about 12 years) of moving from place to place, always chiefly with a view to Leslie's health and welfare. We were at Brighton for about a year-and-a-half, and then moved to Windsor, that he might go to Eton, still as a day scholar.

During the year 1841, my parents had a good deal of anxiety about their eldest son, Herbert, then an officer in the army, and stationed in the Ionian Islands, and afterwards at Gibraltar. His health had always been very delicate, and he appears to have been subjected to a good deal of annoyance through the rough practical joking of his comrades, and to have once or twice incurred reproof from his superiors for some (very trifling) irregularities. In reading the letters received at the time, I am impressed at once by the manly, open-hearted simplicity with which my brother acknowledges his own errors, without a word of complaint against others, and the intensity of my father's feeling as to the whole matter. I can easily imagine, though I was too young to know much about it at the time, with what extreme dread my father would regard the slightest departure from the Puritanism of our home atmosphere. He was indeed greatly relieved when my brother consented to leave the army, and settled in London to read for the bar, amusing himself by the writing of occasional magazine articles after the fashion of his family.

To his Wife

3rd March, 1841

". . . . . Living alone, I sometimes am oppressed by myself. I seem to come too closely into contact with myself. It is like the presence of some unwelcome, familiar, and yet unknown visitor. This is a feeling for which I have no description in words. Yet I suppose everyone has now and then felt as if

he were two persons in one, and were compelled to hold a discourse in which soliloquy and colloquy mingle oddly and even awfully. When this takes me, I always turn my thoughts Kemp-Townwards, and so recover my self-possession.

"But living alone, I sometimes feel, more than at other times and at other places, as if the object of our adoration were with me. I kneel down, and convert the language of the Bible into prayers and thanksgivings, reading it (literally) on my knees, and in the mental as well as the bodily posture of prayer. I know no mode of addressing the Most High better calculated than this to raise high and holy thoughts: addressing Him in the words in which He has condescended to address us. May He guide and sustain and answer your prayers and mine, my dearest wife. Much need have we to intercede for each other and for our children. . . . ."

17th May, 1841

". . . . . Oh, may God bless our poor boy, and then I shall once again be light of heart. . . . ."

19th May

". . . . . My thoughts are continually shaping themselves into prayers for him. . . . .

". . . . . The E.R. [Edinburgh Review] affair proceeds rapidly. . . . ."

27th May

". . . . . There stands on my chimney-piece here a clock,—tick, tick, ticking from morning till night.

Each tick, when I listen to it, sounds like a knell, or like strokes of a pick-axe undermining one's house. Let us build on the rock. . . . ."

31st May

". . . . . Still no letter from Corfu. This is the eighth day I have looked for it with a beating heart. But 'Why art thou so cast down, oh my soul, why art thou so disquieted within me? Put thy trust in the Lord, for I will yet thank Him, which is the help of my countenance and my God.' So, I think, runs the text. . . . ."

1st June, 1841

". . . . . The Review does not prosper just now. I am not quite quiet enough for it, and my uncertainty about Napier's estimate of it keeps me down a little. But in the meantime I think that I am learning to turn my thoughts upwards. . . . ."

2nd June, 1841

". . . . . I have a long and very complimentary letter from Napier about the Review [Port Royal.] It is absurd enough to think and write so often on such a matter, but it has become important to me now as a sedative, and therefore I value everything which tends to secure me the use of it—the use, I mean, of my pen in that way. . . . ."

8th June, 1841

". . . . . Thanks be to God for this better account. . . .

"I have not felt so light of heart this many a day."

9th June, 1841

"I dined with Wordsworth, Whewell, Mr De Vere (the most beautiful of men,) two lords, Mr Maurice (a great wonderment,) Marshalls out of number, Lady Monteagle, and I know not who besides. In the evening Carlyle, Milman, and all the World and Mrs World—there's for you!"

No date

"I was at a large party at Taylor's last night. We were *all* geniuses. . . . .

"We are all talking politics, and are all therefore very dull and stupid. . . . ,"

29th June, 1841

". . . . . It is just half-past three. The town is beset on every side with counter statements of the poll in London. Each side claims the victory. In half-an-hour it will be decided; in half-a-year it will be forgotten; in less than half-a-century all these excited people will be in the other world. This world is none of the wisest.

"Dr Arnold has just been here. I like him hugely. I have seldom met a man more to my taste. He is going to Spain to see a battle-field of Julius Cæsar. . . . ."

30th June, 1841

". . . . . No faith in railways any more. They have cheated me too often. But if they should begin by the 12th July, that being Monday, I might be the first adventurer by it. . . . ."

Monday, Something of July

"The railway is not a bad railway, though there are some ugly places. We came from Brighton in four hours and ten minutes; from Hayward's Heath in just two hours and ten minutes. It is quite as good a conveyance as the Birmingham; the whole charge, 15s."

6th July, 1841

". . . . . Lord John went to be married this morning. All hail to him. He shall be king hereafter, ..."

15th September

". . . . . Your letter is surprisingly amusing for a Brighton letter.

"No manner of news. Not a mouse stirring. I can't make news, can I? . . . . ."

27th September, 1841

"I came from the station at Brighton to London Bridge in just one hour and three-quarters, with no seeming hurry, and with no dialogue, which last was a relief to me. . . . ."

14th October, 1841

". . . . . I hold it an almost certain rule that it is wise to have nothing to do with sad and melancholy people if one can avoid it. A light-hearted man or woman is *presumably* a much better man or woman than another. . . . ."

19th October, 1841

". . . . . Extreme alarm about America, but no intelligence as yet. . . . ."

20th October

". . . . . No more news from America, but what do *you* care for a war? Wait till Brighton is bombarded, and then you will care. The fact after all is that you don't believe what I and all wise croakers do believe. . . . ."

27th October, 1841

". . . . . There is actually not a single copy of your father's sermons to be had. . . . . I have bought the 'Life' and the 'Complete Duty.' Do you know I never think of the writer of those books without a sort of awe to think that I am his grandson-in-law? He was a wondrous man—as unlike such as I am as the sea at Brighton is unlike this puddle in the park by me; I am quite serious, though I say it absurdly. ". . . . . Lord Jeffery is getting well. I rejoice in it. I know not why, but I really love the man, though he bores me. . . . ."

When at Brighton for the Sundays, my father greatly valued the preaching of his cousin by marriage, Henry Venn Elliott; and about this time he sent him the following suggestions of topics on which it might be useful to preach:

". . . . . *First*,—I know few topics on which Christian morals seem to me to be less studied or understood, than in what relates to the expenditure of money. Every one of us has an account to render of the use of that talent, and each succeeding day presents some problem for every man's solution as to the right use of his income. There are some great fixed principles

bearing on this branch of duty which ought to be firmly fixed in men's minds, and which, as far as I can see, are remarkably unsettled in most men.

"*Secondly*,—I can both observe and feel that there is great obscurity in the conscience of a large number of Christians on the subject of their intercourse with books, and the right use to be made of the widely-extended facilities which we all enjoy of enlarging our acquaintance with literature in its various branches. Did you ever hear or read a sermon on the subject of intellectual self-indulgence?

"*Thirdly*,—I have scarcely met with any man who, if I should judge him by his ordinary conversation, would appear to me to understand that branch of Christian ethics which relates to men's duties in regard to civil government. Our political freedom of thought, speech, and action must be subject to some restraints much more strict than one would infer from the ordinary demeanour of those who profess themselves Christians. As a citizen, I have a right to indulge in any degree of jealousy of the rulers of my country. But, as a disciple of Jesus Christ, I am to exercise reverence, charity, candour, self-distrust, and an extreme dread of propagating calumny. But my teachers from the pulpit leave me to adjust for myself, that is, they leave without any adjustment at all, the limits within which Christianity would control the exercise of my political franchise of hostility to the Government for the time being. I daily hear them spoken of with a rancour and uncharitableness which, as it would be guilty

if directed against any other body of persons, can, I think, hardly be innocent when the rulers of my country are the objects of it.

"*Fourthly*,—The duty of almsgiving has been greatly darkened by the political economy of our times. Yet doubtless it is a most sacred duty; and I should think time and industry well bestowed in showing how the importance of it is to be reconciled with a due regard for those great social interests which the abuse of it has so greatly endangered.

"*Fifthly*,—There is a Christian virtue to which I never heard an allusion from the pulpit, and of which I have scarcely witnessed the practice in any circle in which I have mixed, though all Roman Catholic books are full of it. I mean the duty of silence. Unless I am much mistaken, frivolity of discourse, mere talk for talk's sake, is one of the most besetting sins of our generation. Yet what more clear than that there never can be a proper composure of mind in him who employs the organs of speech and hearing, without remorse, in the interchange of all the light things which are continually floating and thrown up on the surface?

"*Sixthly*,—There is a great problem, partly economical but much more religious, as to the accumulation in our houses, equipments, and so on, of those superfluities of life, in the creation of which so very large a portion of our fellow-countrymen must necessarily seek their subsistence. This kind of question is in one sense identified with that of the principles on which a man should spend his income,

or regulate his savings; but I advert especially to the effect of these lusts of the eye on the spiritual health; and I greatly desire a wise determination of the problem—How far ought I, in this singular state of society in which my lot is cast, to incur risks of that kind in deference to the reasonable claims upon me which the manufacturers of such things undoubtedly have to some extent.

"*Seventhly*,—The duties of Christians in reference to the religious controversies of the times, are, I think, very little considered. Yet, what man can live in the world, and not find daily occasion for the practice of them?

"*Eighthly*,—Since the world began, there never existed in any one country such a mass of people as are now, in England, in possession of leisure in an unfortunate abundance, especially amongst women. Never before was there such a violent pressure in the higher ranks of the nation for the means of sustaining young men in the rank of life in which they were born. From this singular contrast of injurious repose and injurious competition, much religious counsel is, I think, to be drawn, which is much needed by the greater part of us.

"*Ninthly*,—But of all the unbroken ground, that which seems to me to be most completely lying fallow, is the subject of conventional or sectional morality,—those innumerable versions or relaxations of the decalogue, or of parts of it, which each profession and each class of society has invented for its own use, and defended by its own favourite sophistry."

. . . . . .

Very soon after the date of this letter came the news of Mrs H. V. Elliott's death.

To his Wife

4th November, 1841

"This is indeed a heavy blow, though not at all unexpected. . . . . Poor fellow, what a blow! and yet how strange that one should be quite sure that if he lives he will resume his spirits, his activity, and much even of his happiness. This is indeed a strange and mysterious state in which we live."

To Rev. H. V. Elliott

22nd November, 1841

"My dear Henry Elliott,—That God may sustain you, that He may Himself interpret to you the sense of this mysterious dispensation, and that He may enable you to resume with composure the duties of your sacred office, and to discharge them with zeal and a success constantly increasing, until He shall at length re-unite you to her whom you have lost, are wishes which, during these last three melancholy weeks, have been constantly in my mind, and which have not seldom formed themselves into prayer. Yet to express these wishes to yourself, seemed to me so much like taking a place in a mere ceremonial, and so fully have I been convinced that your thoughts have been drawn above and away from every solace which human sympathy has to offer, that if my amanuensis had not reminded me that my silence was open to a misconstruction, I should probably not have broken it.

"I have sometimes admitted a doubt whether of all those who have traversed this valley of tears, the happiest (considered merely as a man) was not 'the Man of Sorrows'—the happiest because his acquiescence in the Divine Will was incomparably more perfect than that of others, and because at each successive moment he was enjoying a triumph over the weakness of nature and the trials of life, of which the wisest of his followers can scarcely form to themselves an image. I have even thought it questionable whether the most exalted state of felicity [attainable] by any created being is not in fact made up of those elements of suffering and of difficulty. I can scarcely reject the supposition that the economy of Divine Providence, which in our present state so often overwhelms the faith and depresses the spirits of those whom God best loves, is but a type of His government on a far more enduring and extensive system. That joy which the heart of man hath not conceived, but which is known only to such as have a more distinct and intimate consciousness of the Divine Presence, may perhaps in part consist in His approbation, earned by sacrifices, and even by pains sustained at His bidding, for the promotion of His glory.

"Whether there is any state of existence in which the fruition of pleasure is not thus relieved and enhanced by the endurance of distress and toil, is, however, one of the great secrets, the solution of which is reserved for a higher stage of our spiritual and intellectual progress. But that in this world the balm which our Heavenly Father pours into the

wounds which He inflicts on the hearts of His faithful children will at length compensate, and even more than compensate, for the sore agony which He sometimes requires them to undergo, is a fact which, even in the absence of revelation, we might have learnt from what we know of Him and from what we see of human life. The day will come, nor is it very remote, when your heart will cease to ache as it now does,—when the habit of thinking of her as enjoying the holiness and the peace of heaven, yet really, though silently and invisibly, the companion of your solitary path on earth—when the tranquillising sense of trust in God, continually acquiring strength even amidst the darkness in which you move—when your increased power of ministering to the consolation of your fellow-sufferers—when parental affections, flowing in a deeper because a more confined channel than before—and when your own nearer approach to the world where she is waiting to receive you, will together diffuse over your mind a peace more unbroken, and even a cheerfulness more abiding, than you knew even at those moments when you hung with the fondest delight over the treasure from which for a little while you are separated.

"May the love and the peace and the blessing of God be with you and your children. I have never said to you before, and but for this sad occasion I should never have said it to you, that there are but few men whose friendship I value more than yours, or whose happiness is dearer to me.

"I am, my dear Elliott, with sincere regard and affection, most truly yours, JAMES STEPHEN,"

To his Wife

7th January, 1842

". . . . . I have just had a sort of scene with ——, with whom I have parted on such terms that I suppose (and I cannot but hope) that we shall henceforth be strangers. He is a very shabby fellow, but good-humoured, exceedingly clever, and on the whole kind-hearted."

16th February, 1842

". . . . . So poor old Mrs —— seems to be really sinking at last. . . . . Well, well, this world, I trust, is not all. But clouds and darkness rest on the next, and our dignity (such as it is) is but to see that it *is* dark. It is something to see the limits of our knowledge, and to wish that they were enlarged. Meantime, to our duties, and (such as they are) to our enjoyments. . . . ."

17th February, 1842

"—— cuts me dead as often as we meet. I, holding all this sort of thing to be exceeding trumpery, have written him a note, of which I enclose a copy for your Excellency's perusal. I don't mean to be familiar with him any more, for I have no confidence in him. But no man shall get me into a quarrel, or a pouting. . . . .

". . . . . That goose —— has not answered my most courteous note. I care as little for him as for all the rest of one's new acquaintance, and yet it is not in one's heart (happy that it is not) to be really careless about the goodwill of any human being with

a head on his shoulders and two legs below them. So I had rather that he answered me. . . . .

". . . . . I have not one word more to say—dry as my fender, and dark as the smoke from my fire, I am your obedient servant, J. S."

21st February, 1842

". . . . . Your brother Henry has been here, talking about Sierra Leone with an interest in the place and people which I quite envy. To me a colony is as turtle-soup to an alderman—daily fare and hardly palatable. . . . ."

23rd February, 1842

". . . . . Dear child,—all this protracted care about him [Leslie] has had the usual effect of endearing him. I hope that I shall be able to conquer, in this instance, that wretched anxiety which haunts me on almost all occasions like a spectre. 'Where is your faith?' is a question I was struck with this morning. It is like a commanding officer saying to his soldier—where is your sword? One has laid aside, thoughtlessly or indolently, a necessary part of the armour, offensive or defensive, required in the war, and the enquiry implies a rebuke. That sermon is preached for me, but you may have the benefit of it if you like, though you have far less need of it. . . . .

". . . . . To say the truth, I *am* weary of my way of life—far more than I ever was till now. It is absurd to say so when, as you say, we seem drawing towards the close of this long and strange system of separation. But there is no reducing inconsistent

man to any intelligible explanation but by the use of rather humiliating estimates of him. . . . .

". . . . . However, there is one great truth and one great duty—the truth that God has been unutterably bountiful to me, and the duty to acknowledge and to feel His goodness. . . . ."

". . . . . I have so little to do that I have just paused to write this at p. 151 of Sir James Mackintosh's book on 'Ethical Philosophy,' which you never read, and had better not read, seeing that it is hard reading and fine reading, and not particularly profitable reading, though it does very well for an idle Under Secretary of State like me. The profound solitude of my rooms favours such employments. The bustle of yours would render them unprofitable or useless. Oh brain of mine, and oh, thou spider within it, what webs of words are spun from thee and by thee ! . . . ."

To J. F. S., for his birthday

Downing Street, 2nd March, 1842

". . . . . To God, who has so greatly blessed us in you for these past thirteen years, I desire to offer my humble thanksgivings on your account. You have been a good and a pleasant child to us, dutiful, affectionate, and full of filial confidence in our affection to you. Happen what may in future life, it should be a comfort and a cause of gratitude to you to remember that for so many years you have contributed so much to make your parents happy, and have never given them one moment's serious pain. May He guide

you, my dear boy, in years to come. He calls himself a Father to all His rational creatures, because they all know, or may know, what filial kindness and duty are; and may all learn to think of themselves as His children, and of their Redeemer as their elder brother. Whoever has learnt that lesson has not much more to learn in this life. Whoever has not learnt it is in a state of miserable ignorance, even though he has all literature and all science at his command. . . . ."

To his Wife

16th March, 1842

". . . . . God knows that I should shudder at my ill desert if the thought had not lost much of its edge by familiarity. But still it is of no use, it does no good, it promotes neither His glory nor the advantage of any human being, to sink down into depression and hopeless dejection, even for sin itself. So I will try to take courage, and to rejoice before Him in gladness and thankfulness of heart for all His goodness. . . . ."

21st March, 1842

". . . . . And now, my dearest wife, let me not close this note without calling on you to join with me in giving our humble thanksgivings to God for His gracious answer to our prayers. Our son *is* at home again. He *has* returned in health, and (I trust) in peace. He has brought back with him less (at least so it seems) of the contagion of that fearful calling than my fears had foreboded. He has returned with his affections active and simple. . . . .

". . . . . May God bless him and be merciful to him. It cannot be very long before he must again leave us. This is indeed the condition of life, especially of our period of life. That we have yet young children, and dutiful and affectionate and intelligent children to gladden our house, is a mercy which we have out of the common course of affairs—so far, at least, as the example of my old friends illustrates it. For all God's infinite mercies let us strive to render the acknowledgment of grateful, cheerful, confiding hearts; and of self-controlled and well-regulated feelings; but still more the acknowledgment of obedience, in the fullest sense of that word, to the will of Him who has so largely and so wonderfully blessed us. Oh me! 'Why art thou so vexed, oh my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me?' is one of my most frequent self-questionings. Would that I could as often answer—'Put thy trust in God, and be giving thanks, for I will yet trust Him, who is the help of my countenance and my God.' J. S."

On the 23rd March, 1842, we moved from Brighton to Windsor, where the next few years were to be spent for the sake of my brothers' education, as day scholars, at Eton. During this time my father used to go to Downing Street every day, returning in the evening in time for tea (not of a very "severe" kind,) thus entirely escaping dinner, a meal which for many years he eschewed, believing that this extreme abstemiousness was necessary to the performance of his heavy work at the Colonial Office. Whether he

was right or wrong in this belief I do not know. His health was, on the whole, remarkably good, though he went through several severe illnesses, all, I believe, indicating over-work, and more or less threatening the brain. He certainly succeeded in accomplishing an amount of labour which was thought extraordinary by those with whom he was officially associated.

It was during our life at Windsor that most of his "Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography" were written; and this seems the place for a few words as to his attitude towards the topics with which those essays were so largely concerned.

In all religious questions my father was accustomed most distinctly to avow his own position to be that of "the unlearned." It is quite true that his avocations had not allowed him to devote much time to the study of philosophy or of theology, though he had, I think, a marked aptitude, certainly a strong inclination, for both. It was, perhaps, partly the effect of his natural gift for speculative thought, that he was so keenly aware of his own limitations in this respect. This consciousness did not prevent him from holding, or from setting forth, strong opinions on some religious questions. It only infused into his language a great caution and humility, and led him always to make it clear that he was speaking in a broad and popular sense of things equally important to the learned and the unlearned. For, although he clung always to the hope that others saw further and deeper than was possible to himself, he

did not by any means think that it was right for the unlearned to surrender their judgment blindly to that of their superiors; or to absolve themselves from the duty of patient thought and continual readiness to meet correction on their own account. He would, I think, at any time have welcomed such an escape from the burden of responsibility as is offered in many forms by the Church of Rome, had his principle and conscience allowed him to shut his eyes to the insufficiency of the grounds on which it claims the right to relieve individuals of that burden. He could not solace himself with compromises, and he always asserted his Protestantism in vigorous and unequivocal terms. This did not prevent his feeling an almost wistful sympathy with the religious experience of devout Roman Catholics. His naturally ascetic turn of mind, and his love for systematic and clearly articulate religious thought, strongly inclined him towards "the saint-making church." But his deliberate conviction was that Truth was against the system; and, with all the tenderness and devoutness of his habitual feeling, his allegiance to truth and sincerity was ever paramount.

The interaction in any mind of thought and experience is no doubt profound and intimate beyond the reach of any ordinary power of analysis. It would be altogether presumptuous for me to attempt to trace it in my father's case. But I do not think that it would be possible fully to understand his point of view without bearing in mind the great importance he attached to what is perhaps the less obvious side

of this interaction. Everyone is ready to recognise the effect of belief upon conduct. My father, I think, held it to be of at least equal importance to recognise the way in which practice influences belief, and gives or withholds the key by which alone the faith of others can be interpreted or assimilated. It was his profound habitual sense of the necessity of purity of heart and life to any true spiritual vision, which led him to attach so much importance to the beliefs of some who were by no means his equals in speculative ability, but in whom he saw a moral and spiritual beauty, and an actual experience of holy living and of single-minded devotion, which he believed to be far beyond his own attainments. His extreme deference to those whom he thus reverenced was sometimes even a little provoking to his children; but I think that (in my own case at least) the doubt was rather as to the justice of his comparative estimate of himself and of the objects of his reverence than as to the weight which such superiority, if real, would rightly give to their convictions. At any rate, I fully and earnestly share his belief in the supreme importance of uprightness and humility of heart, and of real spiritual experience, as compared with mere intellectual ability, in giving a right judgment as to spiritual things. It is just because of the weight which seems to me to be due to these qualities, and because of the importance of their effect upon the inward vision, that I so earnestly desire to make known to others what was my father's own habitual frame of mind with regard to the unseen and eternal.

I certainly do not mean to suggest that my father, in his great reverence for moral and spiritual experience, even in those intellectually inferior to himself, considered errors of belief to be of no consequence; or that he failed to attach great (though not supreme) importance to exact and lucid thought. I believe that he regarded intellectual clearness on theological topics as one of the highest rewards of moral and spiritual integrity. He certainly strove continually for the utmost precision of language and transparency of thought to which he could attain; and desired especially to reduce his own religious exercises to a distinctly articulate form. He shows again and again a dread of the mystical and quietist methods of devotion as tending to vagueness, and perhaps to evasion of difficulties, although he was not without considerable sympathy with some of the mystical writers in many parts of their thoughts and practice,* especially in his continual consciousness of the Divine Presence, as at once the source of his strength and the object of his most fervent desires; and I may add also that no Quaker could entertain a more intense horror of war, though here, again, he was unable to shut his eyes to the theoretical difficulties of the question.

* Aubrey de Vere, in a letter to Henry Taylor (dated 5th October, 1877) says:—"You might add great good humour to the list of Sir James Stephen's good qualities. I remember once, when he was launching forth against the High Churchmen as inconsistent, I answered that no one could escape disparagement, and that he was himself sometimes regarded as 'a transcendental Quaker with a tendency to Popery.' He took no offence."—Correspondence of Sir Henry Taylor.

To Macvey Napier

26th December, 1842

"I have not troubled myself much to consider what kind of sentence ought to be pronounced on the Roman Lays. I have read them repeatedly, and with great delight; and a little boy of mine, in his eleventh year [Leslie] recites them with the utmost possible glee. I always attach great moment to the impression made on intelligent children by poetry. Suffrages seem to me to be strongly and decidedly in favour of the book. But there is a considerable body of dissent. The dissenters maintain that the Lays are not Roman, but Walter Scottish—that they are picturesque and not characteristic—and that the poetry lacks passion, philosophy, and a vast many other good things as essential to good poetry as sweetmeats are to a bride cake. To all of which I listen, without losing one particle of my conviction that my friend has written a delightful book, the like of which no other living writer has proved his ability to produce."

. . . . . .

The following extract is from a letter addressed to his sister-in-law, Emelia Venn, on the occasion of a heavy sorrow which had befallen her sister, Mrs Batten, in the death of one of her two daughters, and the severe illness of the other (afterwards Mrs Russell Gurney). Miss Venn was living with her brother John, Vicar of St. Peter's, Hereford, with whom all her life was spent in a singular sunshine, overclouded only from time to time by her intense sympathy with her brothers and sisters in every sorrow which befell

them. I think that my aunt as nearly as possible fulfilled my father's ideal of the life most to be desired for a woman—combining many of the avocations of a Sister of Charity with the brightest domestic happiness, and a rare fulness of interest in the affairs of those she loved, and in the larger concerns of the outer world. The home which she shared with her brother at Hereford for nearly fifty years, and for the first twenty years of that time also with the aunt who had brought them all up, was a sort of second home to all the family circle, and our frequent visits to it are among my happiest recollections.

My uncle and aunt were much beloved, and she especially was a sort of universal adviser and consoler in their large parish. I used to feel, when allowed on each successive visit to share her daily "rounds," that it was like reading a deeply interesting serial story. In every house there would be some new instalment of family history to be shared with my aunt, and lighted up by her glowing sympathy and appreciation of every detail, whether humorous or pathetic.

To Miss Venn

Downing Street

26th October, 1843

". . . . . And now, my dearest sister, let me for one moment be your adviser—a most unworthy adviser, I am deeply conscious, but I think not without a profound solicitude for your welfare. It is not an advice, but a command, 'to mourn as though we

mourned not'—it is not a phrase, but a truth, that the time is short. The excessive indulgence of any emotion, however unselfish and lovely its origin, impairs the powers with which God commands us to serve him. Activity is the appointed solace for sorrow. The mitigation of the woes of others is the medicine by which our own are to be relieved. Abound then more than ever in strenuous efforts for the sick, the poor, the ignorant in your parish; and give to grief those hours only which you cannot occupy with active duties and with earnest devotion. Husband your strength of mind for her sake, and think of this trial as the occasion of giving glory to God by a patience more exemplary, and an acquiescence more complete, than you have ever yet been able to exert. It is indeed a very sore trial; I know not how to take the measure of it. It closes to her the brightest hopes of life, and overclouds such as remain. It comes at the end of a series of sufferings so long continued and so severe that one can hardly feel sure that her strength will sustain the burden. All this, and much more than this, is true; but then, it is also true that we are all living in a dream and an illusion, and that when thus waked up to a conviction of the real vanity and worthlessness of these earthly satisfactions, we may by God's grace substitute for them some better, and purer, and more enduring good; and so it will be with her. Her heart is and has long been devoted to her Maker. She has long been striving to sacrifice her will to His, and now she is learning the still more arduous lesson of making

His will her own. Be at peace, then, dearest E——. Do not regret that the object of your tenderest love should be thus ripening for a nobler and happier state of existence, Do not lament too much that your sister should have to endure what her and your Father has sent for the maturing of those graces which His Spirit has implanted.

"We are all growing into years. With the longest lived of us, the time cannot now be very long. If, oh if, we may but meet our parents and our departed friends in Christ at that day, then how light would seem these 'light afflictions'?—light in that comparison, though otherwise overwhelming. May God of His infinite mercy in Jesus Christ bless, console, and strengthen you.

"Ever most affectionately yours, J. S."

To his Wife

6th December, 1843

". . . . . Give my love to each and all, and tell dear —— that if I took too much to heart this morning what passed, or if I misunderstood him, it was an error of affection, and that all errors springing from that source should be forgiven. . . . ."

To Macvey Napier

5th February, 1844

"It is very good-natured of you to take so much trouble to refute the opinion (by whomsoever entertained) that some fog of editorial displeasure had

risen to intercept the communications between us. I will not deny that I am glad to be assured that it is otherwise, although I have had no one cause, except that of your long silence, for spinning such a theory. And when I turned my thoughts that way, I had very little difficulty in finding other good reasons in abundance why you no longer knocked at my door. I knew that many of your contributors must be importunate for a place, that you must be fencing and compromising at a weary rate, that there were many interests of the passing day which you could not overlook, and that we should all have growled like so many fasting bears if denied the regular return of the Macaulay diet, to which we have been so long accustomed. . . . ."

To Mrs Austin

Windsor, 6th January, 1845

". . . . . You will not suspect me of affectation, (or if you do my amanuensis will be able to re-assure you,) when I say that it seems to me nothing less than comical, and a sort of burlesque, to present to such a man as M. Cousin such an affair as my writing about Port Royal. However, I have no wish to act the part of a young lady who requires pressing to sing, and dies of vexation if not so pressed: therefore I shall send you a copy of the performance aforesaid, in the full expectation that the very profound philosopher, to whom you propose to give it, will have the pleasure of laughing at you for your partiality to your friends. It will be something to have given such a man a text for a little pleasantry.

"He has, however, made me sad. His paper about Pascal is really the most melancholy revelation it has ever been my lot to hear or read of, for unless my faculties are quite unequal to the encounter with such a question, as perhaps they are, it seems to me evident that even the mighty genius of Pascal was limed in a mere net of words, and that a discussion, which essentially is altogether verbal, is made to issue in extravagancies better fitting a dervish, giddy with whirling and besotted with opium. It is for all the world like a man employing the most exquisite optical instruments in order to throw doubt on the fact [that] he himself has any eyes in his head. This sceptical philosophy, if so it must be called, is suicidal from its birth, beginning as it does by at once assuming and negativing the same proposition. Voltaire's 'Let us grow our cabbages,' or St Paul's 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,' are the only consequences to which such speculations can tend, and I for one would much rather begin at once by growing cabbage and eating it than take such a journey in order to demonstrate that I could do no better. . . . ."

To his Wife

15th January, 1845

". . . . . Oh where are the people who are at once really religious, and really cultivated in heart and in understanding—the people with whom we could associate as our fathers used to associate with each other. No 'Clapham Sect' nowadays! . . . . ."

17th January, 1845

". . . . . Yesterday was like the day before, and to-day promises to be like yesterday. Fogs without, hiding some very fine hills and valleys. Coal-mines and coal-works the order of the day with the household. Too much eating, too much talking; I am made too talkative, and mourn over it when I am alone. . . . .

". . . . , The art of giving good advice in a good way is one of the arts which have perished. . . . .

"I hear much of late of newspaper abuse of me, and rejoice in my resolution never to look at it. . . . . As it is, the vexation is not very great, and assuredly it is a very common one. Rejoice we that I am the railed at, and not the railer. . . . ."

19th February, 1845

"When I got home last night Lady G. sent me another invitation. So I could not refuse. She wanted me to talk for the amusement of two young men, whom she did not know how to entertain. So I talked. Oh me, what happy people are the dumb!

. . . . . .

"There is some prospect of my being assailed in the House of Commons this evening; I have written to Lord Howick and to Macaulay to defend me. But I have not heard from either of them in reply. It doesn't *much* matter, after all, whether I am attacked or not, or defended or not. It *is* a small thing to be judged of man's judgment. . . . ."

28th February, 1845

". . . . . Events make a point of *not* happening, lest they should give me something to write about; and they know that without them I have nothing that I care to write. . . . ."

4th March, 1845

". . . . . Hildebrand died this morning of a *coup de plume* given him by me. I enjoyed his destruction. Two sheets more and I have done with him. I can't tell what to think of it. One falls in love with one's own work when it is in the doing, and into disgust with it when done. At least I do. . . . ."

To Macvey Napier

14th May, 1845

". . . . . My more immediate object in writing is to remind you of John Mill's book ('System of Logic,') of which I have lately been reading a considerable part, and I have done so with the conviction that it is one of the most remarkable productions of this nineteenth century. Exceedingly debatable indeed, but most worthy of debate, are many of his favourite tenets, especially those of the last two or three chapters. No man is fit to encounter him who is not thoroughly conversant with the moral science which he handles; and remembering what you told me of your own studies under Dugald Stewart, I cannot but recommend the affair to your own personal attention. You will find very few men fit to be trusted with it. You ought to be aware that, although with

great circumspection, not to say timidity, Mill is an opponent of religion in the abstract, not of any particular form of it. That is, he evidently maintains that superhuman influences on the mind of man are but a dream, whence the inevitable conclusion that all acts of devotion and prayer are but a superstition. That such is his real meaning, however darkly conveyed, is indisputable. You are well aware that it is in direct conflict with my own deepest and most cherished convictions. Yet to condemn him for holding, and for calmly publishing, such views, is but to add to the difficulties of fair and full discussion, and to render truth (or supposed truth) less certain and valuable than if it had invited, and encountered, and triumphed over every assault of every honest antagonist. I therefore wish Mill to be treated respectfully and handsomely. I wish it the more because I have a great personal liking for him, and a high esteem for his knowledge and powers. . . . ."

CHAPTER IV

1846—1847

WINDSOR—WIMBLEDON

Journal—Letters to T. E. Dicey, T. Babington, J. W. Cunningham, J. F. Stephen

THE year 1846, which was to bring the great sorrow of his life, opened on my father alone at Windsor, my mother being at Brighton with us children for the Christmas holidays. He writes to her on New Year's Day:—

1846

". . . . . God bless and watch over you during this year 1846. I walked early and long in the Park this morning, and in the multitude of the thoughts which were in my heart, I thought much and with much earnestness about you. But what and how inexhaustible a topic this annually recurring theme is. God be with us all, and bless us, and lift up the light of His countenance upon us, and give us peace. J.S."

During the first three quarters of this year my father kept a Journal—so far as I know for the only time in his life. It seems to have been often written at Downing Street, in a locked book, which I never saw till many years after his death. It does not contain

much of a more private nature than is contained in the following extracts; though there is, of course. much of which the interest is temporary or domestic only. It appears to me curious, that with the aching eyes so often mentioned, he should have added this occupation to the reading and Edinburgh reviewing, which were his habitual relaxations from official labour. The Journal is entirely in his own beautiful handwriting.

JOURNAL—1846

1st January

"In a walk through 'The Long Walk' yesterday, I catechized myself thus: What have you been about this last year—what have you read—what new pursuits—what new friends—what gains—what losses mentally and spiritually? I might as well have asked the old elms for their annual biography. All was indistinct, confused, and murky. Would that I had written a Journal of 1845, I exclaimed, for then I should at the end of it have had some means of answering these questions. . . . . I know not why, but since life began to wane with me, I have taken to delight in the face of nature more than of old. I am shy in most things, and shy enough in claiming any sort of taste or accomplishment—so I say little or nothing of this affection. But the motions of crows wheeling away with the sunrise over the tall trees to forage in distant fields moved me sensibly—a mere winter sunrise, and yet placid and bright after a night of tempest. I made two resolves—to study more the Book of God, and my own heart, and for the latter

purpose to write, as I am doing, with a running pen what first comes to my mind. . . . .

". . . . . And now, fare thee well too, thou first day of 1846. I have been at my work fairly enough since thy sun rose, and have at odds and ends of time read some chapters of the 'Essai sur les Mœurs et l'Esprit des Nations'—a book of broad views and narrow prejudices, but well worth the reading."

4th January

"A long walk before breakfast (it was a walk of morning devotion), a walk to Slough, a drive to Downing Street,—a mass of business of detail. . . . .

". . . . . If a man had to look out for a well-conditioned hierarchy, he should go to Thibet, and put himself under the Llama (if that is the way to spell his title), who has the good sense never to let himself be heard or seen. I don't think that well-taught and civilised men ever look to so little advantage as in their hierarchal character. It is a sort of dignity nobody knows how to carry gracefully—between the pomp and the would-be-easy gentleman style. Sam Wilberforce, now Bishop of Oxford, once a child with whom I played, how will he comport himself? Too conformingly when off his Sedes; too imposingly when on it; and yet with infinite grace and amenity whether off or on—a good man, I trust (exceedingly clever, dexterous, and handy) though severely tried. . . . ."

7th January

". . . . . Here is a letter from Napier, asking me for an 'Edinburgh Review.' Oh, my dry brains! Hope

looked in on me—the first time this many a day. I like Hope exceedingly. He has a full mediocrity of all other talents, and cheerfulness and good humour, and graceful manners: which for living with are worth the genius of Shakespeare multiplied into that of Bacon—a very honest and brave man to boot, with a heart in his bosom, and a voluble careless tongue in his head; I saw him for the first time four years and a quarter since; during all that time we have met and talked daily as partners in office, without a cross or an unhandsome word on either side; which, as I am twenty years his senior, redounds to his glory rather than to mine. . . . ."

8th January

". . . . . I have been reading all the readable bits of the first two volumes of 'Lord Malmesbury,' from which many things might be learnt. What chiefly rests with me is his saying, in a letter written to a brother diplomatist, 'I have never received a single instruction from Downing Street worth the reading.' Yet Lord M. was in the Service for thirty-five years. Alas for our despatch manufactory! Very true, nevertheless. But instruction-writing is one of the 'solemn plausibilities of life,' and it is but beggarly wisdom to deride them, or to execute them as though one saw through them and despised them. The mortar in a house is as useful as the brick or the stone; and these forms of ours cement and give unity to what would otherwise be a mere chaos. Besides, there are despatches condemnatory and laudatory,

which have their use and significance, let Lord Malmesbury say what he will. . . . ."

10th January

". . . . . Observe first, how much one's life consists in sympathies, kindly or the reverse, with one's kind. This catalogue of names constitutes the record of a day, during which I have been living in the reflected thoughts of other people. What hell could Dante have invented so good as one vast, eternal, unvisited solitude, without the power of going mad in it! It makes one's flesh creep to think of it. And note, secondly, how these days pass with no record of any distinct acts of virtue—*e.g.*, of alms, of active kindness, of valour, of self-restraint. As to alms, Jane must look to it, as she spends all my money. As to the rest, I have only to plead that the routine of my existence, converted into habit, and degenerated into necessity, puts me out of the way of the sublime and beautiful in act, just as completely as if I were a staymaker, stitching all the days of my life. Now, that is but a shallow and shabby account of the affair, but I lack time at this moment for looking deeper into it.

"N.B.—I wrote to Napier a half promise of a review about Grotius, and I wrought out as I walked to Slough what really seemed to me a very decent sermonette on the Beatitudes, and the ensuing precept of shining before men. But I have no means of recording it just now. My propensities are homiletical."

11th January

". . . . . Now, this is but a bad account of a day. *Perdidi.* Yet I had one long meditative walk *solus*, and another with F——, when we talked about all manner of things. The fact is that I yielded to my listlessness too easily in the morning as a sort of apology for omitting to go to —— Church. I knew that he meant to preach a funeral sermon for ——, and I felt an absolute dismay at the thought of being drawn on so plaintively (and may I say mawkishly) for the sympathetic. Question—what is the reason why the emotion excited is in the exact inverse proportion of the effort apparently made to draw it forth? I am as so much putty to all the arts of rhetorical undertakers. . . . ."

13th January

" I have been turning my thoughts once more to Grotius, and this is the main thought of to-day on that chapter, namely, that such books as the 'Veritate' prove that which scarce anybody denies or disbelieves: such as the coincidence of prophecy, the universal and early acceptance of the miraculous stories, the propagation of the gospel in an unaccountable manner (though that is less clear) and the unrivalled excellence of the Christian faith and precepts, and, amidst much sin and weakness, its inestimable benefits. But the theoretically sceptical are so, all this notwithstanding, and all this allowed. Their real doubt is as to the logic of the matter. It respects the principles on which assent ought, in such a case, to be yielded, and

on which inferences ought to be drawn. Butler has grappled with the real difficulty better than anybody, and Pascal, had he lived to complete his 'Pensées,' would have done far better still. And yet Pascal was, of all sceptics, the most enormously sceptical! See Cousin's account of the suppressed part of that book. It is in a late number of the 'Revue des deux Mondes,' which (let it not be unrecorded, for it is the greatest compliment I ever received) the said Cousin sent to me. I should have liked but too well to have been a real and true man of letters. . . . ."

14th January

". . . . . I went to the Athenæum in the evening, and —I am ashamed to confess it even to myself—passed an hour and a half in reading the songs of Béranger, the French Burns, but how inferior to the Scotchman. There are the conviviality, and the intensity of mere animal passion—the love of country, the feverish spirit of independence, some of the grace, much of the freedom, and an exaggeration (which no human fancy could outrun) of the freedoms with things sacred, in which Burns revelled—but none of the touching harmony of the soul with internal and external nature, imparting to the verse itself a corresponding flow and sweetness, and but little of the genuine laughter-loving fun. Nevertheless, Burns and Béranger have much in common, and if I wanted to turn a penny in the article-writing way, I would write to prove it."

15th January

"The incidents of this day, over and above the usual account from Jane, are, that in my walk to Slough, I composed a disquisition, which I am really sorry to lose, about the reasons why no man is virtuous who does not exercise himself in secret acts of virtue, in which general doctrine there is more than meets the heedless ear. . . . .

". . . . . I have written as usual masses, and I have read in Voltaire and in the monastic orders; and I read or ran through half a volume of a new book called 'The Times of Pitt and Fox'—a mouthy, wordy book, yet from the subject readable, or at least traversable. Don't let me forget to add that —— called on me, and that I exhibited a masterpiece of reserve and silence—not my forte, alas! usually. Still it is something to know my infirmity, and to shun loquacity by keeping out of the way of listeners. . . . ."

18th January

". . . . . The paternal is not usually an agreeable relation to the child, especially to sons; and though 'father' may be entitled to receive all reverence, duty, love, and so on, yet it is for the most part a mere parchment title, acknowledged in theory, and only in theory. And how can one blame the children that it is so? How can any man be lovable who is seen with brows habitually overcast with care, or is heard habitually lecturing, or who indulges his temper, or his love of ease, or of any other self-indulgence, in

his children's presence, because it is their duty to respect and love him? . . . . Without strictness and sternness there cannot be much flow of deep tenderness towards anyone in the superior relations of life. . . . ."

22nd January

". . . . . I never served but one man (Mr Huskisson) who extorted the confession that his was a dominant understanding; nor but one (Lord John Russell) who compelled us to feel that his was a dominant soul. The rest mere throwings up of the Tide of Life; commonplace men in high station—mimes, or at best dramatists: I should say actors."

23rd January

"This day is remarkable for the appearance of Sir R. Peel's speech on the Corn Laws, a great pending revolution, as it now seems. But what the real effect will be is one of the unrevealed mysteries with which Time is pregnant. I think that I could be very happy never to hear another word *de re publicâ*. It is ever an exhibition of what is bad within and showy without; and yet even without so bad that the finest varnish cannot conceal the real and offensive truth. . . . ."

28th January

"I think that this is to be a *dies non*—a blank day with nothing to record. At least, it is more than half over, and has yielded nothing but the commonplace events—breakfast, walk, train, etc.: yet it is a great and eventful day *quoad rem publicam*. For here is Sir Robert Peel revolutionizing our laws of

trade, and knocking over the Corn Laws, and proclaiming (very justly, I think,) that commerce is, or ought to be, the great peace-maker of a selfish world. How the world has changed its mind since my youth. I cannot think of a commonplace, political, philosophical, or religious, which has not received a grave shove since then. The results will be marvellous, but I shall not see them. Still, to be at a river head, knowing that it is so, may be just as soul-enlarging a spectacle as to be at the estuary. . . . ."

30th January

". . . . . I have a great regard for Spedding. A mind like the trade-wind regions of the Atlantic; always serene, always in motion, always pleasant—not passionless, but never agitated by passion—a most clear-sighted and equitable judge of men and things—wanting only strong impulses to become a great man. . . . ."

2nd February

". . . . . Called also the oldest of all my friends, and strange to say the best loved; loved in spite of much transient, and some permanent disesteem. But what a man—what fire, what energy, what fine uncultivated talents, what dormant neglected powers of being highly cultured! And then, such a temper; only too good—almost phlegmatic—strange combination of self-indulgence and generosity—of waste and self-denial—of grace and rudeness. But after forty-three years of strait intimacy, he might take on him the nature which has fallen the lowest, without losing my affection, such as it is. . . . ."

3rd February

". . . . . I this morning signed my agreement about the Grove House, at Windsor. The future of a whole year and a half! It is an abyss which it needs a steadier or a lighter head than mine to look into."

4th February

". . . . . I read much of Henry IV. and of Marie de Medici, and of Concini and of Richelieu in Voltaire, still admiring his wonderful breadth and distinctness of view, and marvelling at my own slow progress. But every hour of the day, save half a one at night, is blocked up by despatches and locomotions. . . . ."

5—8th February

". . . . . On the 6th I dined at Lord Monteagle's, with the Master of the Rolls (Lord Langdale), and with Milman and Rolfe, the judge and his wife, and other men and other wives known perhaps to fame, but not by name even to me. The great talk-topic of the day —Corn Laws, and next to that Carlyle's 'Cromwell,' and next to that Lord Campbell's 'Chancellors,' with anti-Puseyite discourse by the way from Milman and Myers. And there was Spedding, the brother of James S., a man of impressive look and presence (perhaps my skill in physiognomy was aided by the knowledge that he was a remarkable man). And, as touching dinner-parties, I never liked, I now abhor them. My stomach loathes such feasts. My remembrance of the table of Dives and the couch of Lazarus becomes painfully vivid at the sight of them. I lack

the courage to be silent. I have neither the spirits nor the knowledge to talk to my own content; and I never do talk at any such place without compunction afterwards. I will assuredly keep out of the way of the vile three courses as diligently as possible. . . ."

15th February

"I walked with F—— and —— to the Forest Church, where Mr —— preached on the parable of the Sower: in the evening Mr ——, on the Labourers in the Vineyard. Dear Mother Church, thy spokesmen are not selected so as to excite any danger that we should be dazzled by human eloquence, or entangled by human wisdom. The next reformation must begin at the pulpit. . . . ."

17th February

"The newspapers of the day report a speech of Sir R. Peel's, which places him among really great speakers—vehement, sarcastic, luminous, comprehensive, and full of large views and energetic resolves; everything short of the world in which poets live, and into which orators (so called amongst us) attempt usually to soar. It is the perfection of the human understanding of the second order, under the influence of the highest possible, and the most protracted culture. . . . ."

18th February

". . . . . Sir Robert totters. To-day Sir de Lacy Evans, the Whig, supported by the incensed Protectionists, beat, at the Western Election, Captain Ross,

Sir Robert's candidate. A great crash is on the way to us, and a drawn fight between town and country—free-traders and protection-mongers—the merits of which I understand but darkly, though I see the result: a victory of the movement, and the dislocation of many an old rivet and bolt in the old state mechanism, very fearful to behold (in Carlyle-ian language) and *inter alia* boding me a new master."

19th February

". . . . . Verily Sir R. Peel is falling, yet it is a splendid sunset. What power, what a range and aptness of thought, what copiousness of energetic language, what sarcasm he abounds in! Save that he cannot walk within the magic circle of the sublime in act or in conception, he is a great man: at least he is a man who compels all commonplace people to stare, and wonder, and admire or hate. I have a notion, too, that his *morale* is sound and good, and that he fails in that only in the finer sensibilities—a material failure. . . . ."

20th February

"I live the life of a pendulum, but this pendulous existence comes to us all after the morning of life is over, and my course of oscillation (from Windsor to Downing Street) is wider than most men's, Still papers, papers, papers. . . . ."

21st February

". . . . . Sir James Graham called upon me to talk about convicts, etc. But he talked mournfully and ominously *de re publicâ*, especially the Irish famine, which

seems truly awful, and close at hand. Four millions of starving people to be fed for five months! He told me also that he feared that the House of Lords will throw out the Corn Bill; and he said much (or something) of the miseries and dangers of a new election in the midst of such a social tempest as now rages. In short, he was out of heart, and being now, as Secretary of State, the chief manager of Irish affairs, his lack of spirits is contagious. Well, I have seen old England brave many a storm before now, and will hope for the best. . . . ."

22nd February

". . . . . I read some of the new volumes of D'Aubigné's 'History of the Reformation,' which, like all the former volumes, moves at too uneasy, catching a pace for history. The story is told by a string of pointed sentences, hardly cemented together. But it rouses the old evangelical flame, never long dormant among men, and has had an immense success, here and in America."

2nd March

". . . . . I then opened to Mr G. my wish to resign my Under-Secretary of State-ship, retaining my lawyership, but . . . . . I give it up as a hopeless scheme. In fact, I tremble to be self-willed and self-seeking about it. Home in the evening, and was greeted by dear, dear L—— and C—— with their usual riotous affection, the value of which they, dear children, little know or conjecture."

3rd March

". . . . I have never yet passed a day without praying for the spiritual weal of my children, since I had any to pray for, and if we err on the side of not pressing them to religious demonstrations, developments, and early sensibility, may God forgive us, and compensate the loss to them! My daily and nightly terror is that they should be 'patent Christians'—formalists, praters, cheats—without meaning or even knowing it. . . . ."

4th March

"There was a debate in the House of Lords last night about transportation. Samuel Wilberforce (Bishop of Oxford) spoke against the whole system vehemently—not heeding the utterly unmanageable evils of the opposite system—not knowing them probably. I wrote to him to point them out, and to observe how glibly words flowed from the lips of those who have only to find fault. The 'Times,' as usual, abuses the luckless Colonial Office, which is in truth little more than a periphrasis for the noble J. S. and his bird of passage chief for the time being. Oh, how I hate and long to quit these public affairs! My nature never meant me for them, nor for anything else exciting. My mind is as sensitive as my eyes, and as soon pained, irritated, and darkened by any kind of glare. In all truth and honesty I have but a so-so opinion of myself in my relations to my fellow-men, and as far as I can divine, I am unpopular, unsuccessful in the attempt to please—passing indeed

for a man of more talents than I really possess, though of less amenity, cordiality, honour, and other social qualities than I should probably ascribe to myself. It is a small thing to be judged by man's judgment, but it does not seem, or feel, so. . . . ."

To T. E. Dicey

Downing St., 18th March, 1846

". . . . . Poor old Mr Gisborne is on his death-bed. I have a daily letter from his house to keep me informed of the slow process of his decay. He lies there in perfect ease of body and in perfect mental serenity: awake but for a few hours in the twenty-four, and then visited by pleasant waking dreams which he supposes to be realities, and enjoys accordingly. He has performed one great duty—the duty of being innocently happy, to the highest possible perfection; which, with all due respect for your neighbour, the Pope, and all his predecessors, seems to me a more sublime virtue than is ascribed to most of those whom he or they have canonized. . . . ."

(Journal) *21st March*

". . . . . Miss Fenwick is an old lady of (?) 65 or thereway—manifestly a beauty half-a-century ago, but now a fine ruin, though an utter ruin. But she is even yet charming, so kind, so wise, so devout, so friendly, that is, so confidingly friendly. An enviable lady is Miss Fenwick. She became known to us through Henry Taylor, her cousin, and earnest worshipper. Poor old Mr Gisborne! old, but why poor?

Among the multitude of the visits which Death has made into the old Wilberforce or Clapham circle, this is almost the only one which has brought with it no terror and no regret. He has exhausted the resources of happiness in this world, and is going, let us firmly believe, to a state where such resources will prove to be inexhaustible. . . . ."

"And this is the 28th of March, 1846, and I am at Yoxall Lodge—a marvellous break in the monotony of my days. . . . .

". . . . . I am in one of the well-known rooms—that which John Bowdler fled from (how many years ago?) to escape the ticking of the clock, which I at this instant hear. Yes, tick, tick away. There does not seem much in it. Yet to how many has it been as a passing bell! While you have kept steadily to your old task, tick, tick, we have been growing into the queer-looking assemblage of old or oldish people who met here together yesterday, and he, your old owner, is now added to the number of those who are put out of sight, not as queer-looking, but as unfit for human eyes. And what matters that? The chemical dissolution of the human frame into new forms of being is nothing in itself, indissoluble as may be the association of ideas which connects the Tabernacle with the Dweller in the Tent, and the material organs with their own intellectual uses. I am glad to have looked on a mummy, to be convinced that the being put underground and the being kept above ground makes no difference. But to unsheath the sentient entity, and to plunge it into new relations, new

offices, new modes of thought and action, of joy and of suffering—how endure the steady thought of it? No one can endure it. At least no one does. We all use narcotics too largely for that—opium-eaters in one sense or another are we all, and we have all confessions on that score to make, if we were brave enough and honest enough. Dear old Mr Gisborne, he lived in a period the most exciting and full of turmoil which has ever occurred since the Reformation. His real distinction and praise is to have been profoundly tranquil and composed from the first to the last, without having ever for a moment subsided into apathy or indifference. There has been almost perpetual sunshine in this valley for the last seventy years, though the tempest has been raging everywhere else. Saints who have mortified themselves to the quick are to be met with in every collection of ecclesiastical worthies. But how few who have enjoyed themselves to the utmost! How few elevated enough to believe that such joy would be acceptable to God!"

From the 1st to the 7th April

". . . . . I have also read nearly two volumes of Lord Campbell's 'Chancellors' (very pleasant light reading) and a good lump of Mr Newman's 'Developments,' from which I learn, or if I were teachable should learn, that the Bible contains only the germ of Christianity, and that, like other germs, it has expanded into a full-blown and fruitful tree, of which Rome is the seat, and of which Trent saw the ultimate expansion. I have not yet, however, got beyond

page 115. But those pages are enough to show that if Mr Newman be right, Voltaire, Gibbon, and Hume had much more reason than I suppose he would willingly ascribe to them. In this great conflict of opinion and arguments, one thing only seems to me clear, namely, that the words of Jesus Christ and His deeds, earnestly studied in devout exercises, and interpreted to the conscience by the Divine Spirit, and familiarized to the heart by an obedient life, must lead us right; or that there is no trustworthy leading at all. . . . ."

To T. E. Dicey

Downing St., 8th April, 1846

"It is just ten days since I followed to the grave the body of my old friend, Mr Gisborne, with his sons and daughters, and son-in-law and grandchildren. We formed a large, but I cannot say a sorrowful, party. There was not one amongst us who would not have rejoiced to exchange our condition for his; and we were all agreed that so happy and so blameless a man we had never known. Yet there was no real want of a good, homely, quiet pathos about the proceeding; and if the pathetic were to your taste and my own, I think I could make something in that way of the scene I witnessed. . . . ."

(Journal) *5th May*

"This day was memorable for a long session and talk with Lord Jeffrey and Mrs J. in the evening, at Coulson's Hotel. Ever charming in talk he is. It flows in a clear, sparkling, easy stream, with no

superiority to oppress (like T. Macaulay's) the vulgar auditor, and with no torpor to depress him. . . . ."

6th May

". . . . . I had a long talk with Taylor and with Blackwood, each wishing to resign; and then in the evening Lord Jeffrey again and Mrs J., with the child and the land tortoise. I am not at all unwilling to resign myself. But first, conscience; second, prudence; thirdly, young children twain bind me to the stake. Well, it is best to be passive about all the greater movements of life."

7th May

". . . . . Macaulay came and talked, amongst other things of the fear of death, which he maintained to be but the love of life, disappointed and thwarted. Quære? There is mere instinct, a most potent cause. Indefinite alarm, another. Conscious demerit, and much else. But it is (in point of fact) chiefly a trial of nerves. —— may not have lived like a saint. But die when and how he may, he must die like a hero."

(Journal) *16th May*

"I went to breakfast with Tom Macaulay, and met Hallam, and Milman, and Bishops Samuel Wilberforce and Thirlwall, and Lord Glenelg, and Empson and Robert Wilberforce, and Monckton Milnes, and Charles Buller—a very goodly company—a most luxurious use of the highest faculties for the mere purpose of persiflage and entertainment. Many a

good story (good to laugh at), many a strange quotation from T. M. But I did not, and do not, like it. Too trifling for bishops by a deal, and for a society of men, all above forty, most above fifty, some turned of sixty, too thoughtless, and careless and light, at least for noon-day. I might have had much of this society. Have I done ill in declining it almost wholly? I think not."

22nd May

"A day of very severe work—112 (or more) despatches read and annotated. I reached the train quite worn out with fatigue, and alas! had to talk to —— the whole way down to Windsor. More Grote in the evening. . . . ."

The Journal ends abruptly (in the middle of a sentence) in September. Early in October we returned from Devonshire to Grove House, Windsor, hoping to be soon joined by my eldest brother, Herbert, who had spent his summer vacation in a journey to Constantinople. On his return homewards, he was attacked at Vienna by sore throat and fever, but pressed onwards as far as Dresden, where he rapidly became delirious. A German gentleman, Herr Mitthofer, being called in by the hotel keepers as interpreter, took my brother to his own house, and, with the help of his widowed sister, nursed him as if he had been his own son. After a fortnight's illness, my brother was considered convalescent, and dictated to this kind friend a letter, which reached my father at the Colonial Office on the 22nd October. A

messenger was despatched with the letter to my mother at Windsor, who at once joined my father in London, and they set out for Dresden that evening—a long journey in those days. My mother has told me since that my father, from the beginning, had no hope, and she herself scarcely any fear, until after many days they saw the lights of Dresden, when her heart sank; and on their arrival at the hotel the tidings awaited them that my brother had died on the very day on which his letter had reached them. A few days were spent with the kind friends who had watched so lovingly over their son; the grave was visited and set in order; and then they turned homewards—my father smitten by a blow from which he never fully recovered;—my mother from that time more than ever absorbed in her office of cheering and sustaining him. I well remember the evening of their arrival at home, and the indescribable relief with which, after my childish apprehensions of some awful change, I watched them behaving just as usual, entering with quiet cheerfulness into every trifling home interest, and finally banishing my fears lest bereavement should mean lasting gloom. I remember how my father took me in his arms as he entered the house, with the words, "God has been very good to us, my child." And in some dim way I felt even during that first evening the meaning of that "goodness" which "endureth for ever," but which is most vividly felt in the time of the greatest trial. Yet there was from that time a perceptible lowering of my father's physical vitality. I can trace the change very

distinctly in his letters to my mother, and I see it referred to in other family records. In the following autumn, his health so seriously gave way that he was obliged to resign his post in the Colonial Office, as will appear from the correspondence of the following years.

To Thos. Babington

30th November, 1846

"My dear Babington,—It is one of the painful circumstances of life that we have been so long and so completely separated from one another: you driven about by many rude currents, and I confined to the same unvarying spot and pursuits. Yet sorrow [for] a moment has brought us near enough to exchange one friendly greeting. I sincerely thank you for it. Your sympathy is affectionate and soothing; nor am I disposed to turn from any solace which presents itself, for I have, and have had, a burthen to bear not very easily borne. He who was the sunshine of my house is suddenly taken from us. After a youth of strange and habitual infirmities, he was acquiring a firm constitution, and was living wisely and virtuously; loving his mother above all human beings, and for her sake subjecting himself to voluntary restraints of many kinds the least welcome to his natural character. True he was, and brave and upright, and cheerful and kind-hearted as man could be; and he had talents of no common brilliancy, though hidden from those who knew him slightly by some peculiarities of manner, resulting from his long continued bodily

weaknesses. And now, as my thoughts daily and hourly turn to him, I feel an undefined sense of awe when I remember how vast, how inscrutable, and how fearful is the distance which interposes between me and one who, a few short weeks ago, was to me almost as a part of myself, and the object of cares and plans and hopes which have ceased at once, abruptly, and for ever.

"You, my dear Babington, are familiar with this, as with most of the forms of sorrow and disappointment. I earnestly hope that the lesson has come to its end with you which adversity has to teach us all, and that the latter scenes of life may be brighter and more tranquil than some of its former passages were with you. Of Him under whose dominion we are placed, of the wisdom and the love with which He rules, and the meek submission and silence of the heart as well as of the lips with which it behoves us to receive His rebukes, you know (I doubt not) far more than I do; nor do I think it would answer any good purpose if either of us should attempt to impart such knowledge to the other. Our holy fathers, and the circle of the wise and good men of which they formed a part, are, I trust, permitted to look on us and on our children, on our anxieties and our griefs, on the paths we are treading and on the dark abyss in which those paths are to terminate, with more than all their former tenderness and devotion. God of His infinite mercy grant that, through the merits of their and our Saviour, we and they, and all whom we love, and have loved, in this world,

may be partakers of the same mansions in the house of our common Father. God bless you, and your wife and children.

"Ever affectionately yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

To his Wife

16th December, 1846

". . . . . I have very serious thoughts of our leaving Windsor at once, and I think I could convince you that we ought, even in a view to money. . . . .

". . . . . Prepare yourself for one of my abrupt movements. Windsor, *i.e.*, Grove House, is really uninhabitable in very cold weather. . . . ."

22nd December, 1846

"May God be with you and bless you, my wife. . . . . May He answer such prayers as we have been enabled to offer aright, either in our solitary hours, or when uniting together in supplication. May He especially answer our prayers for the beloved son we have lost. May He watch over the children who are yet left to us. . . . . Dearest Jane, though it be but seldom indeed that we express to each other these desires, it is indeed but seldom that they are absent from the hearts of either of us. Sorrow has rendered them deeper than they used to be; and the new aspect which this awful event has thrown over everything about us, must predispose us both to pray earnestly for each other, especially on this day*. . . . . But let us take heart, and go on for the rest of our

* Their wedding day.

course (however God may appoint for us in external things) with more of prospect than of retrospect, hoping, confiding, submitting, obeying, and preparing. Again, my dearest wife, may the peace of God, and the love of God, and the consolations of God be with you for ever.

"I am on the point of leaving Windsor, not to return (I suppose) till the summer, if then. I do not easily keep the tears out of my eyes—not for the love of the place, but for the remembrance of him, and of the others with whom we have lived so pleasantly here. . . . ."

28th December, 1846

". . . . . Awful stories about Ireland. It sickens one to hear them. I expect actual famine, from what people at the Treasury say. Heigh ho!"

29th December, 1846

"Well, the engagement about Wimbledon is made. . . . .

". . . . . I have been used (and so have you) to be too much interested about such matters. Now let us take care not to be too indifferent to them, ...

". . . . . The newspapers are full of a despatch *of Lord Grey's*, and of eulogies on *him* for it. That is better than if they were full of reproaches of me. Perhaps both might be equally unmerited. . . . ."

Downing St., 5th January, 1847

"I have as little as you can have to communicate. Yesterday wore away, and to-day is wearing, quietly, and with none but official incidents to distinguish it.

But now to watch the flight of time becomes a much more solemn work than it used to be. I feel myself enveloped in clouds and darkness, and I strive (not very successfully) to obtain light from the Source of Light. Ever since his loss, I have become conscious in a way I never was before of the relations of this world and of this life to the world and to the life to come; and so I am less and less capable of burying myself in the vanities which surround me, and of forgetting what air-bubbles they are. Out of all this ought to come good fruits. May it be so!

"I met Senior this morning. . . . . He has just come from Lord Lansdowne's, and is just going to Lord Ashburton's. I wonder how life feels when thus sugar'd? I suppose cloying. But I shall never know by any experience of my own. . . . ."

12th January, 1847

"Nothing occurs externally, and what passes within is not worth a record: except that I must say that my heart is heavy about Ireland. It is the most awful event of my life, the French Revolution not excepted. . . . ."

To Rev. J. W. Cunningham

(On the death of a Son in the West Indies)

Downing Street
24th February, 1847

"God help and pity you, my dear Cunningham, for vain is the help of man.

"Four months have elapsed since I heard the tidings of a loss not dissimilar to your own. Yet it still seems among the dreams rather than the realities of life, that he and I are inhabitants of different worlds, with no thoughts, interests, pursuits, or affections in common. And the more I reflect, the more does that feeling pass into a conviction, that it was a bond stronger than death, and that death has not severed, and cannot sever it. I commend him not with less, but with greater earnestness, to Him, in whom we and our child have our common life, and our vital union. I feel that each passing day draws us nearer to each other, and I pray with increased fervour that we may meet at last where the light of the Divine Countenance visits and shines continually.

"With deeper knowledge and wider experience of the dispensations of Providence, may you have also more profound and abiding consolations. But alas! it is a bitter cup, even to those who are most firmly assured that it has been prepared and tempered by the hand of a Father.

"Ever affectionately yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

To J. F. S.

Tavistock, 13th July, 1847

". . . . . Poor old Wordsworth; I am truly sorry for him. I never knew a happier man than he has been on the whole: his whole existence a sort of privileged (or as one might say professional) dream, except

when looking after his stamp office; his health admirable, his fame constantly on the increase, surrounded by idolaters in his own house (and to say the truth idolizing his own self in his poetical character), and possessing the happy faculty of looking on everybody and thing connected with him through the spectacles of his own rich imagination. The old man has really lived thus far in fairy-land. It would be sad to be so interrupted, were it not necessary for him, as for all the rest of us, to be from time to time reminded that there is a better land still, to be won, not by dreams, however beautiful, but by strifes and conflicts not the most palatable to flesh and blood."

To J. F. S.

Downing St., 9th August, 1847

". . . . . I do not much wonder that you are surprised with David Hume. In order to understand his books you ought to read his life, of which there is a capital account lately published, and of that account Empson gave an excellent abstract in the 'Edinburgh Review' about half a year ago. Hume was a cold-blooded animal, with a fine perception of ugliness, and an exquisite taste in writing, which he had borrowed from the best French models. He was as profound a thinker, and had got as deep into the subjects of this enquiry, as is possible to a man without passions and without imagination. Even his ill-will to Christianity and to England, and to all English literature, was more of a fastidious disgust than of an hearty enmity.

He was a mere thinking machine, and the range of such machinery is, at best, but very narrow. 'With *the heart* man believeth,' says the Sacred Text, and 'without a heart man doth not understand,' is no unfair parody on it. You must remember also that in Hume's day infidelity was very much in fashion, and had the attractions of novelty, and it happened then, as it will always happen, that a dashing spirited assault could not be overtaken at once by an equally spirited and successful defence. It took many years to bring the defenders of Christianity to some reasonable agreement among themselves, as to the method in which their new and formidable antagonist was to be dealt with. Looking at his 'Disquisitions' now, with the aid of the lights since thrown on them by the Defenders of the Faith, they appear shallow and even puerile—(that is, such is the appearance of those you have found out in his History)—but when they were new-born they alarmed everybody else, and greatly delighted himself. His History, except when touching on religion or party politics, is an incomparable abridgment. Still it is but an abridgment, and one might almost as well stop with Mrs Markham as with him. I have a very great dislike to him, both as a man and as a writer, and I fear I dislike him the more on account of the degree of admiration extorted from me in his favour. His great strength was in Political Economy—a subject exactly suited to such a frozen calx as he was.

"I am very glad of Macaulay's beating. I would have voted against him in favour of a pro-anything, or

an anti-anything,—that my friend Tom might do his duty and write his book. . . . .

". . . . . I rejoice to hear that you are going to the Speddings'. They are capital men, full of original thoughts, as well as of sound learning, and as simple and sincere as children. . . . ."

CHAPTER V

1847—1850

WIMBLEDON—TORQUAY—CAMBRIDGE

Letters to Henry Taylor, The Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, W. Empson, J. W. Cunningham

IN October, 1847, my father was suddenly taken ill, and within a week or two his medical advisers insisted on his resigning his post at the Colonial Office, and strongly advised his spending the winter abroad.

On leaving the Colonial Office, my father was made a Privy Councillor and K.C.B.—the latter distinction being then for the first time bestowed on some civil servants.

As soon afterwards as he was sufficiently recovered, we went to Paris, with the prospect of spending the winter in Italy; but my father's health having unexpectedly improved, and some difficulties arising about the long absence from England, we returned, after spending a month in Paris, to Torquay for the winter: the warmer climate being recommended both for my father and my brother Leslie. Before leaving Wimbledon, he writes to Henry Taylor :—

To Henry Taylor

Wimbledon Common

17th October, 1847

"My dear Taylor,—I gratefully accept your offer to think and act for me about the terms of my retirement, qualifying the commission only by the observation that Lord Grey has shown me such exceedingly great kindness in all his communications on the subject, that I would not on any account do, or have done on my behalf, anything which could be construed as indicating any want of confidence in him. I can most truly say, that whatever arrangement he may finally approve as best for the public good and his own convenience, will be perfectly satisfactory to me. Still, he might commit some unintentional mistake, which you might be able to prevent.

"I suppose I shall be walking on tiptoe and flourishing a shillelagh over your head one of these days, for I am to appear before you all bedizened with titles. I value them as testimonials of good service, and as an answer to old enemies. One of them I cannot help valuing also, because the Queen herself had the graciousness to propose it. But one need not be an absolute Diogenes to hold such things cheap in themselves, especially when one has so little opportunity or prospect of going amongst those with whom they are worshipped.

"God bless you, my dear Taylor. It must be twenty years, or nearly so, since we have been fellow-

labourers, and so far as I remember, no cloud has ever risen between us during all that time.

"Ever yours

"JAS. STEPHEN."

To Henry Taylor

Paris, 21st November, 1847

". . . . . I am a little homesick, and a little sick of inactivity, and inordinately Anglican and John-Bullish —perfectly convinced of the unapproachable majesty of London beneath her dark canopy of smoke and mist, and satisfied that France has nothing to compare with Wimbledon Common and Coombe Wood. I know as much of the news of this place as of the gossip current in Siberia. God bless you.

"Ever affectionately yours

"JAS. STEPHEN."

To Henry Taylor

[*No doubt Torquay, 1848*]

". . . . . That which befell me in October last has indeed shaken the faith which I used to repose in the strength and stability of my own constitution. But all my subsequent experience forces on me the belief that I have no right to pass the remainder of my days in inaction, if any moderate and useful employment should be brought within my reach. Yet, to tell you the whole truth, my heart would neither break nor be saddened by the intelligence that this was impossible. On the contrary, I believe that a perfect freedom

from all active duties, save those of my own invention, would gladden me much more than the possession of the Great Seals, with all the energy requisite for the custody of them. . . . ."

In the Spring of 1848 we returned to the house on Wimbledon Common, and in the course of the summer spent some weeks in Scotland, and in paying one or two visits to friends in the country. The winter was again to be spent at Torquay, for the same reasons, and in the same suspense as to possible appointments and other plans. My father writes from the house of his old friend, Mr Gisborne, to my mother, in October :—

"I long to be at home, *i.e.*, with my homelings, for the locality 'home' has hardly any existence for us now. . . . ."

I will at this point give, chiefly in the words of my brother Leslie, some description of my father's personal appearance and characteristics. It is from about this time that our recollections become distinct enough to be of use. As to his outward appearance, my brother says :—

"My father was rather above middle height, and became stout in later years. Though not handsome, his appearance had a marked dignity." His bearing was peculiarly erect, and his tread firm and vigorous to the last. "A very lofty brow was surmounted by masses of soft fine hair, reddish in youth, which became almost white before he died. The eyes, often concealed when talking by a nervous trick of shyness

(which gave to at least one stranger the impression that he was being addressed by a blind man), were deeply set and of the purest blue. They could flash into visibility and sparkle with indignation or softer emotion. The nose was the nose of a scholar, rather massive though well cut, and running to a sharp point. He had the long flexible lips of an orator, while the mouth," [at times] " compressed, as if cut with a knife, indicated a nervous reserve.* The skull was very large, and the whole face, as I remember him, was massive, though in youth he must have been comparatively slender."

That "nervous trick" of the eyes was very habitual with my father, but he had another habit, which seems to me to have been even more characteristic. Often when talking, or discoursing at his ease, he would fix those blue eyes apparently on the corner of the ceiling, with a dreamy, far-away look, as though all present things and people were forgotten, as he dwelt on some mental vision.

"His health was interrupted by some severe illnesses; his power of work, however, shows that he was generally in good health; he never had occasion for a dentist. He was a very early riser, scrupulously neat in dress, and even fanatical in the matter of cleanliness. He had beautiful, but curiously incompetent, hands. He was awkward even at tying

* Alexander Munro, the sculptor, whose bust of my father, reproduced as the frontispiece to this volume, is to my mind the only tolerable likeness of him, told me that the mouth was the most baffling one he had ever tried to represent, owing to its extreme mobility, and even apparent variation in form from one day to another.

his shoes; and though he liked shaving himself, because, he said, it was the only thing he could do with his hands—and he shaved every vestige of beard—he very often inflicted gashes. His handwriting, however, was of the very best. He occasionally rode, and could, I believe, swim and row. But he enjoyed no physical exercise, except walking, a love of which was hereditary. I do not suppose that he ever had a gun or fishing rod in his hand." [L. S.]

He had no practical knowledge of any kind of art, though he took a good deal of pleasure in hearing music and seeing pictures. I think that sculpture and architecture impressed him more than either; and he had a continual and growing enjoyment of "the face of Nature," though it was neither the unquestioning pleasure of simpler minds, nor the result of any trained habits of observation. He enjoyed the idea of a garden without being able to call many of the most familiar flowers by their names. He was very anxious to encourage his children in cultivating the accomplishments in which he felt his own deficiency, and one might always reckon confidently on his sympathy in any struggle towards excellence, were it only in making a pudding. I am sure that we all owed much to his vigilant criticism of our use of words. Nothing incorrect or slip-shod was allowed to pass in talk with him, and his explanations were so perfectly clear and so interesting that we were always eager to ask for them.

He used at one time to set us to write imaginary letters for him to criticise—he attached great value to

the art of letter-writing for practical purposes, as well as for the exercise it afforded in expression; and he was extremely particular about hand-writing. The same keen sense of the moral significance of even the smallest details was constantly present in his feeling about dress—a matter as to which he could hardly forgive anyone, certainly not any woman, for being indifferent. But indifference to fitness and to beauty of form and colour in dress was, in his eyes, scarcely a greater offence than blind obedience to fashion. Difficult as I found it to carry out anything approaching the ideal thus set before me, I have always felt the whole subject raised by the kind of interest it had for him. His theory was that one should grudge no pains in mastering the permanent principles of the art of dress, in order that their application might thenceforward be easy; and he desired that one should give one's mind seriously to one's toilet while actually engaged upon it, in order to be peacefully unconscious of it whence once accomplished. I think he rather under-estimated the difficulty of both achievements.

It was the same thing with whatever he set before us. His vision of excellence was always stimulating: sometimes, I think, beyond what was altogether desirable. Certainly it seems to me, on looking back, that the one thing lacking in intercourse with him was ease. He continually dreaded lest he should cast a gloom over others; I scarcely think that any of us felt this to be the effect of his presence. It was too vividly interesting; but the result of his unremitting vigilance, combined with his extreme

sensitiveness, was certainly in some degree to cause an overstrain on young minds. "Intellectually," says my brother Leslie, "he was a most capable guide into the most delightful pastures." My own appetite for books was never at all to be compared to that of my father and brothers, and I am afraid that it was even somewhat in abeyance during the years when he would gladly have guided it. At any rate, the provision he made for my historical studies was so abundant, as pretty nearly to quench any inclination in that direction which I might have had to begin with; but the delight of listening to his conversation was one into which I could always heartily enter. In his letters are frequent remorseful references to his "loquacity," and he seems to have been often vexed also by the recollection of some real or imaginary slips of speech. I cannot think that even so sensitive and ingenious a conscience as his can have accused him of any transgressions of the law of charity in his talk. It was as carefully guarded as every other part of his conduct, and few who listened could, I think, have failed to be the better for it. He had, says my brother Leslie, "a natural gift for conversation. He could pour out a stream of talk such as, to the best of my knowledge, I never heard equalled. The gift was perhaps stimulated by accidents. The weakness of his eyes had forced him to depend very much upon dictation. I remember vividly the sound of his tread as he tramped up and down his room, dictating to my mother or sister, who took down his words in shorthand, and found it hard to keep pace with him.

Even his ordinary conversation might have been put into print with scarcely a correction, and was as polished and grammatically perfect as his finished writing. The flow of talk was no doubt at times excessive. . . . . The talk, however, was always pointed, and very frequently as brilliant as it was copious. . . . ."

Elsewhere Leslie says :—". . . . . One thing which especially remains with me was the stamp of fine literary quality which marked all my father's conversation. His talk, however copious, was never common-place; and boy as I was, when I listened, I was constantly impressed by the singular skill with which his clear-cut phrases and lively illustrations put even familiar topics into an apparently new and effective light."

In the autobiography of my father's intimate and highly-valued friend, Sir Henry Taylor, are many references to him, for they were closely associated for many years in the Colonial Office, as has already been mentioned. From these I allow myself to quote some passages, showing the estimate formed of his intellectual abilities by one who had exceptional opportunities of forming a fair judgment of them.

In a letter to Lord Granville, of 7th December, 1869, Sir Henry Taylor says of my father :—" He had an intellect of a wide range and a singular subtlety, with much activity of the imaginative faculty—I think, one of the largest intellects of his day and generation. The origin of the outcry against him was faithfully represented in the epithets used—

'Mr Mother-Country Stephen' and 'Mr Over-Secretary Stephen.' For more than twenty-five years..... he, more than any other man, virtually governed the Colonial Empire. Not that he was otherwise than profoundly subordinate, but he found the way to bring men to his own conclusions. And his advantages from knowledge, experience, intellectual power and enormous industry were such, that perhaps no man of sense could have failed to defer largely to his judgment. . . . ."

"He had, as you suppose, a strong will, and he had great tenacity of opinion; so that, if he did make a mistake (which was very seldom, considering the prodigious quantity of business he despatched) his subordinates could scarcely venture to point it out; he gave them so much trouble before he could be evicted of his error. And in like manner, he was at a great disadvantage in private life, from being so sensitive that his friends did not dare to mention anything which they thought might be mended: not that he would be angry or quarrel with them, but that he suffered so much from it. Perhaps I was more hardy than most of his friends. I remember on one occasion saying: 'But surely the simple thing to do was—so-and-so;' to which he answered doubtfully, adding, 'The truth is that I am *not* a simple man;' to which I replied—'No; you are the most composite man I have met with in all my experience of human nature.'"

In another place, Sir H. Taylor says (writing in 1833, after nine years in the Colonial Office) . . . . .

"I cannot but look at Stephen's case as having a direct bearing on the judgment which I ought to form for myself. . . . . I perceive that a man may give his days and nights to public business, that he may possess every attribute of a philosophical and practical politician—the largest views, the minutest accuracy—the most comprehensive and unerring judgment;—that he may be a man of infinite dexterity and resource;—that he may be from time to time producing, in the ordinary despatch of business, such State papers as the public archives of the kingdom for all the centuries over which they extend will probably afford few to equal;—that every day that he lives he may solve difficult questions, and dispose of intricate cases and complicated masses of documents to an extent to which it might be supposed that no human industry could reach;—that he may take upon himself the heaviest burdens of other men, and transfer to them his own singular accomplishments;—that he may clear away their daily perplexities and sustain their reputation;—and after a long term of such service find himself, so far as his own emoluments, interest, standing, and consideration in the country are concerned, precisely where he was at the beginning, each successive Secretary of State having professed himself very much obliged, and there leaving him."

Happily, the recollection of the quantity and quality of the work accomplished long outlasts any sense of inadequacy in the recognition of it at the time. But I have no reason to believe that there was ever any lack of appreciation of its importance

and excellence amongst those who were in a position really to judge of it.

About two years after his retirement from the Colonial Office, my father was appointed to the Professorship of Modern History at Cambridge; and in November, 1849, we accordingly took up our abode there in a small house on Parker's Piece. We had spent the previous summer at Richmond, where my father was engaged in preparing his "Edinburgh Review" essays for re-publication, with the title of "Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography," with the addition of an essay called "The Epilogue"; in which he set forth the thoughts underlying his sympathetic appreciation of very various types of Christian character, with a fulness and freedom which would have been impossible in the pages of the "Edinburgh Review." In this essay he took occasion to make a sort of appeal to those more theologically competent than himself for some reconsideration of the grounds upon which the doctrine of everlasting punishment was then so confidently taught; believing it to be (to use his own words) "the real, though often unavowed, ground of the doubts which are thus overclouding the spirits of so many of the nominal disciples of Christianity"—a doctrine from which "the hearts of most men turn aside, not only with an instinctive horror, but with an invincible incredulity"; and thinking also that there was not in the words of Scripture any sufficient warrant for so hideous a belief—a belief derived, as he thought, "from ecclesiastical tradition, rather than from any sound and unbiassed criticism."

It seems strange in these days to recall the way in which this question was regarded only half-a-century ago. The Essays were published in 1849, four years earlier than the "Theological Essays" by F. D. Maurice, which cost him his chair at King's College. In my father's case an attempt was made, very soon after his appointment to the Cambridge Professorship, to cause an enquiry to be instituted by the Senate into his published opinions: the object (as was supposed) being to deprive him of his Professorship; but this attempt was speedily put down by the authorities, the Vice-Chancellor, I believe, ruling it out of order. My father's position as a layman, and the slightness, as well as the extreme modesty of his reference to the subject, would certainly have made any such proceedings almost absurdly unsuitable.

A pamphlet published by Mr Bonner Hopkins on the subject of my father's supposed heresies, drew from him the following letter to the Vice-Chancellor, to which I find that he received a "very satisfactory" reply, which, however, has not been preserved:—

To the Vice-Chancellor

Cambridge, 12th December, 1849

"Sir,—On the evening of yesterday, and not till then, I received from the Rev. Wm. Bonner Hopkins, a fellow and tutor of Catherine Hall, a copy of a pamphlet entitled, 'Some Points of Christian Doctrine, considered with reference to certain theories recently put forth by the Right Hon. Sir James Stephen, Professor of Modern History in the University of

Cambridge.' Although I have neither the disposition nor the leisure to engage in the controversy to which this publication invites me, I cannot think myself at liberty to withhold from you, sir, and from the other Heads of Houses, your associates in the government of the University, the answer I have to make to the very grave charges which a member of the Senate has thus publicly preferred against me. I would, therefore, very respectfully, request your and their attention to the following statement.

"First, Mr Hopkins accuses me of having published opinions regarding the Divine nature, and regarding the person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, at variance with Christian verity, and borrowed from the writings of Plato, and the doctrines of Cerinthus. I answer, first, that I am effectually, though unfortunately, precluded from adopting either the Platonic or the Gnostic dogmas by my ignorance of both. What I once knew of Plato I have long since forgotten; and of Gnosticism I know nothing, except from Neander and the other popular Church historians.

"I answer, secondly, that in what I have written on those awful mysteries, I was, and am still, unconscious of having said anything at variance with the doctrines of the Church of England. I had supposed myself to be translating the language of some of her formularies on those subjects into terms more simple, popular, and dogmatic; but otherwise precisely equivalent to her own.

"I answer, thirdly, that if the defects of my theological education, of which I have made no secret,

have led me into any errors of thought or of expression on those topics, I most deeply lament those errors, and desire, in the most absolute and unreserved manner, to retract and disavow them. I have very long since come to the conclusion of my own total incompetency to grapple with those arduous questions, and of my consequent duty to submit myself, respecting them, to the teaching of the Church, as the only method by which it is possible to attain to that repose and firmness of judgment without which no advancement, intellectual, moral, or religious, can be securely made.

"Secondly, I am accused of having maintained, in reference to the eternity of future punishment, an heretical and dangerous opinion.

"I answer, that in the essay to which this censure refers, I have expressly stated that 'if it be indeed the fact that our Divine teacher has really revealed to us the eternity of the punishment inflicted in a future state for the sins of man in this life,' . . . . . 'every voice which would presume to controvert that declaration should be subdued into a submissive silence' . . . . . that 'the truth of Christ is the corner stone of Christianity' . . . . . and that 'I disclaim the very slightest sympathy with that arrogance which would reject any part of Divine revelation on the ground of its inconsistency with the dogmas of human wisdom' . . . . . that 'I yet venture to enquire, or rather to suggest the enquiry, whether any sufficient authority really exists for asserting that Christ himself, or His apostles, taught the doctrine in question' . . . . . that

'my suggestions or surmises are, however, opposed to the commonly received opinion of perhaps all Christian churches'..... that 'the most learned could not, therefore, offer them, except with the most extreme diffidence'..... that 'by one who can make no claim whatever to learning, properly so called, either as a theologian or as a linguist, they are proposed with the deepest possible consciousness of his liability to error.'

"Now if, under penalty of stern public rebukes, it be prohibited to a member of the Church of England to propose, even in terms thus cautious, for the enquiry of those who are more learned than himself, a question of overwhelming importance to us all, then the boasted freedom of thought of the reformed churches has ceased to exist among us, and the counsel so constantly reiterated from the pulpit, that each one should, for himself, verify what is there spoken by searching the Scriptures, is but a snare and a delusion. The topic in question lay immediately in my path; and I could not have avoided it without partaking in what seems to me the almost universal fault of slurring over and evading that which appears the greatest of all difficulties to many humble and diligent enquirers into the truth of Christianity.

"Thirdly, it is laid to my charge that I am a Latitudinarian. I answer that I am not solicitous to avoid the reproach which was endured by some of the greatest theologians whom our University could ever boast—by Cudworth, by More, and by Smith. I answer, further, that I have never met with a single

man who, like myself, had passed a long series of years in a free intercourse with every class of society, who was not, like myself, more or less of what is called a Latitudinarian. The religious exclusiveness of which some make their boast, wears away by a wide acquaintance with the world, just as much as the spirit of *côterie*, or the spirit of partisanship, are laid aside by those who have escaped the trammels of the world of fashion, or the world of politics.

"Lastly, Mr Hopkins has suggested, or rather has stated in his prefatory observations, and especially in the motto prefixed to them, that, as Professor of Modern History in this University, I should want neither the opportunity nor the will to controvert the doctrines which the Church of England delivers to her children, and which the University inculcates on her pupils.

"I answer that I know not on what ground Mr Hopkins claims for himself an allegiance more absolute, or an attachment more profound, to the Church of England than my own. It is but a few weeks ago since I subscribed her Articles. From the very morning to the evening of life I have worshipped, with undeviating punctuality, in her congregations. I have trained up my sons in her colleges, in the earnest hope that the great Head of the Church might in due time induce and permit them to enrol themselves amongst her ministers. Of their and my nearest kindred and progenitors, a large proportion have filled that sacred office. Day by day, continually, the liturgy of the Church of England affords to my

household the forms of our domestic worship. I have no interests in this life which are not intimately connected with her stability. I have no hopes in the future life which do not rest upon her doctrine. If, in the lectures which I hope to deliver in this place, I should inadvertently and unconsciously employ (as a man not regularly trained in theology may perhaps employ) any words not perfectly consonant with the doctrines of the Church, I should thankfully welcome, and carefully improve, the admonitions which, in any such case, you, sir, or any other of the Heads of Houses, might be pleased to convey to me. But if, as Mr Hopkins anticipates, I should, wilfully or designedly, attempt to impair the faith of my auditors in any doctrine which the Church of England maintains, the contempt and indignation which would justly be provoked in the bosom of every honest man by so shameless a breach of so high a trust, would be anticipated and echoed by my own conscience; and that degradation from my academical degrees, which Mr Hopkins suggests, would be followed by a righteous exclusion from the countenance and society of every one to whom truth and honour, integrity and religion, are dear.

"I have the honour to be, Sir

"Your most obedient humble servant

"JAS. STEPHEN."

In a letter of rather earlier date to his old friend Mr Cunningham, he writes, on the same subject:—

25th October, 1849

". . . . . As to the publication to which you refer, I will only say that I am unconscious of having entered into any conflict with any one fragment of the faith on which the hopes of the followers of Christ depend. The mysteries of that faith deepen upon me the longer I live, and the more I contemplate them ; and I confess myself to become less and less solicitous about particular dogmas of any kind, provided only that it be possible, without the use of them, to retain the living spirit of devotion and of love. Especially with regard to the metaphysical questions involved in two of the three creeds of our Liturgy, I must confess that my mind is altogether perplexed with the attempt to encounter them. Nevertheless, I have great confidence in the consent of so very large a body of the Christian world, and in the midst of darkness am thankful for the direction and guidance of the Church —that is, of the Church Universal.

"I have not presumed to say that the Church is wrong in any article of her belief; but I can suggest reasons why it seems to me that the prevalent opinion on that which is incomparably the most important of all those articles should be courageously, though meekly, reconsidered. How strange it is that people are as much exasperated by the attempt reverently to enquire whether the horrible prospect before us is really founded on Scripture, as they could be by an attempt to enquire into the foundation of the hopes which, in his own individual case, everyone so firmly cherishes. . . . ."

To Henry Taylor

15th January, 1850

"My dear Taylor,—May God bless your child and her parents, and may you both be wise enough to hail her appearance in your house as a great blessing, dismissing from your minds the anxieties, at once so profitless and so unthankful, with which so many of us are apt to overcast the gladness with which it behoves us all to receive the best gifts of our Heavenly Father. A better gift than a daughter seldom falls to the lot even of those whom He most highly favours. ". . . . . As to Cambridge, it is not easy to sum up my experiences, conclusions, or presentiments; but we are both clear that it is the best place of residence which we could have selected, if the choice had been quite open to us. The libraries are excellent. The society revolves in too narrow a circle, but otherwise has some few excellent elements in it. There is a constant succession of little collegiate occurrences which keep us from the stagnation of an ordinary country town; and though the country be a prodigy of ugliness, to which nature and art have each contributed their share, I find that I can trudge pleasantly along these most unpleasant roads, because I have always fragments of lectures shaping and arranging themselves in my head as I walk.

"If I were a younger man, I suspect that I should be looking back with some regret to the keen interests by which you Londoners are animated. As it is, I yield myself to the law which requires that the

evening-tide of life, like the evening of each successive day, should be a season of thoughtfulness and repose.

". . . . . Very affectionately yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

To Henry Taylor

Cambridge, 16th February, 1850

". . . . . As to the play, both the Master of Trinity and the Professor of Modern History are looking out for it curiously. He tumbled out some of his ponderous phrases to me a few days ago in praise of the elder brethren of this unborn offspring of your brain, finding in them, unless my memory deceives me, some elucidations of the moral philosophy on which he is lecturing us.

"Ever affectionately yours

"JAS. STEPHEN."

To William Empson

Cambridge, 1st March, 1850

"My dear Empson,—I have not the least doubt that you are right, and that I am wrong, about the 'E. R.' Indeed, I never do entertain a doubt about the ability of every man of sound sense to judge far better for himself than anyone else can judge for him on questions of this kind. Every man best knows his own strength and his own weakness; and if self-knowledge is really as rare a gift as it is said to be, I am quite sure that neighbour knowledge is a much rarer one.

"Go on then, and prosper as the sole monarch of your literary kingdom, unfettered by any constitutional advisers. I have but one wish about it—I mean that you should not commit suicide in any form, or to any extent. Your domestic duties are still as weighty and as urgent as such duties can possibly be. . . . .

". . . . . Our new Regius Professor of Divinity* comes here with the disadvantage of a prodigious reputation. I believe the kindest thing you can do to any man is to propagate no opinion of his talents; and that the most signal vengeance one can take of an enemy is that of praising him beyond his deserts.

"Your nephew dined with us yesterday afternoon, and left us with a disposition to praise him, which, for the reason I have mentioned, I think it a duty to suppress.

"Very affectionately yours
"JAMES STEPHEN."

The following letter was dictated to my mother in the form of a message to Mr Cunningham :—

Cambridge, 20th March, 1850

"My husband says that he thinks no wise or reasonable man would ever affirm broadly and generally that a mother country ought at some time or other to part with her colonies. On such a subject it seems to him to be the duty of a statesman to act on broad principles, not on peremptory rules.

"Applying the question to this country, he thinks that England ought never to give up a single colony.

* Dr Jeremie.

He thinks that the course taken with Canada, on which he bestowed many years' labour, is the only right course. It was that of cheerfully relaxing, one after another, the bonds of authority, as soon as the colony itself clearly desired that relaxation—so substituting a federal for a colonial relation, the change being real, not nominal—no national pride wounded, or national greatness diminished, or national duty abandoned. It remains for the Canadians to cut the last cable which anchors them to us. But it is for them, not for us, to take that step, and to assume the consequent responsibility.

"The same system is in progress with the Australian colonies. The rest are unfit for it—detached islands with heterogeneous populations—wretched burdens to this country, which in an evil hour we assumed, but which we have no right to lay down again.

"We emancipate our grown-up sons, but keep our unmarried daughters, and our children who may chance to be ricketty, in domestic bonds. The analogy is a very close one.

"Further, (I need not tell you that I am writing from dictation,) I am bidden to say that you should look at a very late report of a Committee of Privy Council on the Australian Constitutions, of which report my husband is the author, and at a book by G. C. Lewis on Colonial Dependencies. The first will show you what we are actually doing. The second is an exposition of the principles on which we ought to act. . . . ."

To Henry Taylor

Cambridge, 4th May, 1850

". . . . . Conyers Middleton (who lived in this place, and whose picture in the Public Library resembles Brougham to a twitch) was certainly mistaken in thinking that there has been an end of all miracles since the time of the Apostles. My own lectures prove it; gownsmen and gownswomen fill my room or college hall, the female students of history occupying the gallery, while I, at the other end, address my audience in a sonorous voice, and [with] an assurance which the most intrepid of your Downing Street bores might envy. The art of lecturing has much in common with the art of popular preaching, but, to do myself and my audience justice, we have submitted to a great many very dull topics as they fell in our way. If you really wish to know what kind of thing a lecture of mine is, try to revive your recollection of an argumentative despatch, and of a review of my writing. Stitch the two together in your mind, and you have the lecture. However, I am beginning to tire of the publicity and the excitement of this unwonted labour, and I shall gladly bring it to a close in about a week.

" Do you seriously mean that your Play is to come out for the first time at the theatre? It will make me regret that I do not go there. I reckon upon having a copy among the foremost, and as such copies are printed before the actual performance, or I suppose just in time for it, pray let me have one as soon as

the people in the pit have it. Poverty-stricken as we are, we will gladly pay for it if you feel stingy.

"I cannot say I am surprised, though I am sorry, that De Vere's account with his bookseller is a bad one. He is a man of genius and of knowledge, but I do not think that he knows by what manner of persons the reading world is inhabited. They subsist on solids, not on gases—or rather on gases solidified, not on solids made gaseous. They like to understand easily, to grasp firmly, and to feel powerfully what is set before them, whereas he tantalises them with creations of his own brain, which are not very definite, and which demand a very active digestion to convert them into mental nutriment. He would be a much greater writer if he were broken in to official drudgery, as you have been, and so got to know better how coarse and obtuse is the animal man, with whom, for the most part, he has to do. I, by the way, am called upon by Longman to prepare a second edition of my Essays. I suppose no money will come from the first;* but I am glad of the opportunity of defending my orthodoxy. . . . .

". . . . We men of the gown are all taking up arms against the threatened Commission. I agree with my neighbours that they ought to resist such an encroachment on their Charters. I agree with the Government that they ought to enquire into what we are all doing, and I am about to write to Lord John to point out how I think both objects may be attained. Blessed are the peacemakers, but they are certainly

* The Essays had a considerable sale, lasting till 1905 at least.

unblessed by the combatants whom they seek to reconcile. I anticipate neither thanks nor glory from my intervention, but the reverse. . . . .

" My dear Taylor, we should be very glad indeed to see you and your belongings from time to time. Don't let us drop out of sight of each other. I at least have no friends or friendships to spare.

" Ever affectionately yours

" JAS. STEPHEN."

To his Wife

18th May, 1850

". . . . . I am congratulated by all sorts of people about my lectures. The fame of them has travelled fifty miles, which is odd.

" We are all in great terror and sadness about this French quarrel. I see that all knowing people think it very ill-boding. Tom Macaulay was quite out of heart about it. . . . ."

21st May, 1850

". . . . . There is nothing very new here. Somehow or other, the talk about war is less, and the fear abated; but it is still a grave and an anxious subject."

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CHAPTER VI

1850—1853

CAMBRIDGE—RICHMOND—LONDON

Letters to J. N. Pearson, Sir T. F. Buxton, Bishop Wilson, H. J. Stephen, Mrs Austin, H. Wilberforce, J. Venn, Thomas Carlyle, Dr Whewell

AT the beginning of the Long Vacation of 1850, we went to Cromer for a few weeks' change of air. While there my father became seriously ill, and we removed, for the sake of better medical advice, to Norwich, where a large and delightful house called The Grove, was most kindly lent to us by Mr J. H. Gurney, acting on behalf of his stepmother, the widow of the well-known Joseph John Gurney, to whom it belonged. We spent three months there, and my father's recovery was, I am sure, greatly assisted by this most valuable act of kindness. The illness he suffered from was, I believe, one threatening brain fever, and caused for the time great depression of spirits and a considerable increase of his characteristic sensitiveness. His great resource was in listening to continual reading aloud, even during his daily drives, and it was no easy matter to keep up the supply of books, which had to be at once sufficiently interesting and entirely free from painful topics, or topics

even remotely suggesting painful thoughts. Happily, he was quite willing that we should skip freely.

In September we returned to Cambridge for a few days, to make preparations for spending the winter abroad, and once more we planned a journey to Italy, but stopped short at Paris; my father improving rapidly after our arrival, and finding there great advantages with a view to the Lectures on the History of France, upon which he was at that time engaged. My brother Fitzjames was with us, having just finished his Cambridge career, and occupying himself diligently in the study of French legal proceedings. The five months we spent in Paris passed very quickly and pleasantly, my father enjoying the occasional company of some French acquaintance—M. Guizot, M. de Beaumont, M. de Circourt, M. Mignet, M. Adolphe Monod, and some others—but on the whole we lived as quietly there as in England. We returned to London early in 1851, and spent the following year chiefly at Richmond and Petersham: my father having ascertained that there was no need for him to reside at Cambridge, except during the May term, when his lectures were given.

My mother and I shared his lodgings there in 1851, but in later years he used generally to go alone to the University Arms Hotel. His audience had by this time become very small, and the yearly visits to the University Arms were not very exhilarating times. The writing of his lectures, however, kept him always supplied with congenial occupation. After he had finished those on French History, he delivered a

course on International Treaties, and, later, he wrote one on Indian History;* but neither of these courses were fully prepared by him for publication, and they have never been printed.

I take up the letters from the spring of 1851.

To his Wife

3rd March, 1851

".... I wish I knew how to write to F—— with my own hand, to tell him how deep is the impression which his affectionate carefulness about me, and which his pleasant talks with me these last five months, have left upon my mind. But I am scarcely master of my hand just now, and he is not much disposed to listen to the laudatory or the sentimental at any time...."

To the Rev. J. N. Pearson

1851

"My dear Pearson,—.... What odds would you have laid, when we were at Cambridge, against my holding such an office in these days? and how much would you have added to the chances against me if the bet had been made when I was supposed to be governing forty colonies under the name of almost as many successive Secretaries of State? The probabilities were so enormous against my putting in at such a port, after such a voyage, that even now, when the thing has occurred, I am almost disposed to doubt whether it can possibly be true. However, I have

* These Indian lectures were delivered at the East India College, Haileybury. I am not sure whether they were ever used at Cambridge.

many proofs that it is really so, and among them are piles of lectures, which would make two good octavo volumes, the produce of the last eighteen or twenty months. However much inferior in utility and in real importance they may be to the lectures which you are about to publish, I doubt whether the composition of them has not supplied the author with as much interest and amusement. . . . .

". . . . . We passed the last winter at Paris, where I chiefly employed myself about my French historical matters, and where I learnt, a mongst other things, how low is the estate of the Protestant and how great the advances of the Roman Catholic Church in that country. We had the great advantage of much intercourse with M. Adolphe Monod, whom you probably know, and whom, I suppose, you have heard in his own pulpit. According to my judgment, he is the greatest preacher I ever heard, not excepting Dr Chalmers, or anyone else. Yet even he fails to extend the borders of his Church. To what cause this decline of Protestantism in France is to be ascribed, seemed to me so curious a question, that I have been tempted to hazard a little speculation on it in one of the lectures I am about to deliver. . . . .

"Ever affectionately yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

To his Wife

16th June, 1851

". . . . . I have passed the whole morning in fighting against my stupidity, both that part of it which is

inherent and invincible, and that part of it which has broken forth into my lectures, and for which I must, if possible, find some remedy."

University Arms Hotel,

9th February, 1852

". . . . . At the Athenæum I saw the 'British Quarterly Review,' (Dr Vaughan's,) which *is* curious. It compares me and Macaulay, and gives it hollow in my favour. This Macaulay himself pointed out to me with great glee. Well he might. It is enough to make one burn all the pens and paper in one's house, and hide in the nearest wilderness. . . . ."

8th April, 1852

". . . . . This morning I went to Manchester. If you want to know what it is like, take the dictionary, and look out all the words synonymous with dirty, mean, disagreeable, and sprawling,—then combine them together in the superlative degree, and you have an adjective fit to apply to the City of Manchester. Or, suppose St Giles's to have stretched itself over the whole of London, then a slice of London, taken at a venture, would represent Manchester. I dare say that the mills are exceedingly interesting to those who see them: but I saw nothing of them but their outsides, which are caricatures of Buxton's Brewery. The only memorable thing I saw was a vast market of old clothes; one would think that all the Jews in Europe had stalls there. From Manchester, at about half-past five, I came to this place. . . . ."

". . . . . My travels have taught me two things: first, that Petersham is most beautiful; secondly, that it is most cheerful. . . . ."

Liverpool, 9th April, 1852

". . . . . It is worth while to be away from you now and then, to take a measure of how immeasurably much I depend on you: and on dear C—— too. . . . ."

Cambridge,
12th (I think) of April, 1852

". . . . . Not a soul, at least not a body, in the University Arms Hotel, except my soul and body; so that the poor hotel has not much to boast of in that way. But it may truly boast of being quiet, clean, airy, and civil, and if the hotels at Birmingham, Manchester, and Liverpool made any such boast, they would lie egregiously. . . . ."

". . . . . Once more bless you, and do you bless me."

. . . . . .

To Sir T. F. Buxton

1852

" My dear Buxton,—. . . . . If you have any influence with the Stafford House ladies, and Lord Shaftesbury, pray do what in you lies to bring to an end the unprofitable and pernicious controversy for which we are indebted to their ladyships and his lordship. American slavery will not be slain by any amount of rose-water, pathetic letters, or angry paragraphs. The evil is irremediable, except by the methods by which all the greater distresses of the world are set right. 'I hear the wheels of an avenging God groan heavily along,'—and in such a case all feebler sounds are, I think, a mere impertinence. . . ."

To the Bishop of Calcutta [*Wilson*]

18th April, 1852

"My dear Lord,—I have received the very kind letter which you had the goodness to write to me, on the subject of a series of lectures which I lately published. It would be mere affectation to attempt to conceal either from you or from myself that your approbation has given me great pleasure. But I am much mistaken if I have not been far more gratified by your kindly remembrance of me than by your praise. I have at least one thing in common with Sir Walter Scott, who declared it to be impossible for any critic to please him, because he did not like to be blamed, and because the commendation of others quickened his insight into his own defects, and so compelled him to blame himself.

"When illness, or perhaps I should rather say, when the decided advice of my medical attendants, constrained me to relinquish my office in Downing Street, I soon felt the necessity for a new task, and the great convenience of having a task-master. I was therefore glad to resume my gown at Cambridge, and to write lectures on history; believing that, though there were many men much more conversant than I am with the events of former times, there was no candidate for the office who could in any degree claim equality with myself in that kind of historical knowledge which is derived from a long and intimate connection with the actual government of mankind. My friends, both at Cambridge and elsewhere, assure

me that my attempts have thus far been successful. But of all the testimonies which have reached me, there is none to which I attach so much value as to yours; because, like myself, you have long been accustomed to look at human society from a point of view of which mere literary critics know little or nothing. . . . .

"Some of my reviewers have upbraided me with misapprehending or misrepresenting what Messrs Comte, Mill, and Grote extol as the Positive System of historical enquiry, and with having written unphilosophically, not to say nonsensically, in asserting the doctrine of a particular Providence. I am not philosopher or theologian enough to produce any compendious vindication, or even statement, of that doctrine, on the precise accuracy of which I could myself rely, although I have an indestructible faith in the doctrine itself. Again, I shall be most thankful for information where I could find the most profound and complete investigation of it—that is, the precise meaning of the statement that 'not a sparrow falls to the ground without our Father.' This is, in my view, the very essence of the philosophy of history; and I would gladly return to it if I were quite sure of not losing my way in the intricacies of so great a subject.

"As to Calvin, I fear, from what you say, that I have blundered. I consulted the best living authorities within my reach as to their view of his doctrine before I ventured to say anything about it, and even then, I hazarded only the statement of what the doctrine seemed to be, not of what it really is. For

myself, I am, and have long been, what in our loose way of talking in England, is called a Calvinist ; holding the doctrine of predestination as completely as I believe it to be held by yourself; and nothing could be further from my mind than to intimate the contrary. My bookseller is re-publishing my lectures ; but I am afraid to add anything on these subjects, for I am painfully conscious that they are much beyond my reach.

"It might seem as though I were still living in Great Ormond Street, and you still Minister of St. John's Chapel, Bedford Row, and as if I were writing as one of your congregation to you as my pastor. It is at least a pleasant momentary illusion to believe it. Since those days what immense changes ! I refer not to public affairs, but to the state of all the domestic or private circle with which we are both more or less connected. All our seniors in that circle are gone, with the single exception of my wife's aunt, who, in her ninety-second year, is still animating the house of her nephew John Venn, and possessing an almost undiminished interest in everything and everybody about her, and in the prospects of all her kindred and friends. But with that exception, the houses in which we were both wont to visit, and in which we occasionally met, are all deserted by our ancient friends. Thank God, however, they are, as we have every reason to hope, all inhabitants of some one or other of the many mansions in the house of their common Father.

"My brother-in-law, Henry Venn, keeps bravely at his work. He has, during several years past, pursued

it undaunted by a complaint which long menaced his life, which still occasionally distresses him, and which is manifestly incurable, but he thrives and improves in spirits and strength upon his labour. His brother John is, as he has long been, a kind of apostle at Hereford, differing from other apostolic men chiefly in his intense zeal for giving practical effect, on behalf of his parishioners, to all the economical doctrines of our age, as far as they can be brought into use, for the comfort and assistance of the poor. Not satisfied to be a laborious preacher, he is a grinder of cheap and pure flour, a lecturer on all sorts of subjects, a manager of reading rooms, and I know not what besides—enjoying a more constant interchange of affection with all about him than any other man of my acquaintance.

". . . . . Tom Macaulay (for he must always be Tom to his old friends) does not expect to publish the next two volumes of his history before Christmas, 1854. He, and all other descendants of our dear friend Zachary, are living in the abundant possession of most of the means of enjoyment which this world has to give.

"Lord Glenelg lately called upon me. He has scarcely changed in appearance, and is unchangeable in his gentle and kindly nature—almost too kindly a nature for the rough world with which he has to do. . . . ."

To his Wife

3rd May, 1852

". . . . . I just remember that I was told yesterday that Bonner Hopkins preached the first of four

missionary sermons, that is, of four discourses, in which he is to compare the duties and offices of missionaries now-a-days with those of the apostles of old. So we must forget and forgive our Bonner. . . ."

University Arms Hotel, Cambridge
4th May, 1852

"I delivered a long lecture this morning, There are now scarcely any but the youths. They seemed to be pleased. But the absence of the Dons and the Donnesses makes the thing easier. . . . .

"I am not sorry that you have gone with C. to Exeter Hall, but I should be sorry if she got into the way of going often. It is not a healthful region for the mind, and perhaps not for the body. . . . ."

University Arms Hotel, Cambridge
5th May, 1852

". . . . . It is very absurd that at this place, where there is nothing to do, there is no time for doing anything; and where there is nothing to say, there is no one to say one's nothings to. . . . ."

6th May

"I am glad that you and C. enjoyed the missionary meeting so much. I shall never attend another. I feel as Oliver Goldsmith did when he was asked to read family prayers to his fellow-travellers at Paris. 'I am not good enough,' was his answer. . . . ."

Cambridge, 20th May, 1852

". . . . . Oh, if they who compliment me but knew what is my own self-judgment! Praise of any kind

jars strangely with it. Yet I am glad to suppose that I have the goodwill of Dr Vaughan. I daresay that he well deserves the commendations which he receives. . . . ."

In September, 1852, my father, with his two sons, made a little expedition of about three weeks, through Belgium to the Rhine. He writes from—

Brussels, [12th] September, 1852

To his Wife

". . . . . At Ghent, we climbed to the top of the Cathedral tower, and saw a circuit of grass land, unbroken by the slightest elevation, or by any visible cities or hamlets, but cut by three or four streams, which wind through it like enormous serpents. . . . . We left the place at 8.10 for this city. But first we went to the Béguinage—a convent of (they say) 700 nuns, or Sisters of Charity. Disgusted as I am with the look of Popery, I must except their evening worship. A large church was full of rows of women in black, with immense white hoods or veils. They knelt like so many statues, and a small choir of them chanted like so many articulating nightingales. The lights were just enough to make the scene visible with masses of darkness in the distances. I heartily wished them bountiful answers to their prayers for themselves and others. . . . .

". . . . . Our gaiety has been increased (unless it be our own fault) by a procession in honour of St Nicholas, which has just passed our windows. . . . .

". . . . . If this is Christianity, sure I am that the New Testament is not the Christian Canon. This is the poorest possible exhibition of the poorest possible theatricals: meaning nothing and suggesting nothing, except indeed as it may suggest how little difference there may be, after all, between big babies and little. There all is quiet, plain and simple, the interior sublimity manifesting itself both through and by the lowliness of the exterior forms. Here everything is not only human, but human even to tawdriness, and mawkishness, and imbecility; the Goddess and her child turned into two deplorable dolls, the Deity exhibited under the form of a wafer, and scores of little girls, in mock bridal dresses, scattering flowers in the path of the great object of all this parade. It is, I know, only the old heathen worship in a new dress; but it is a worship desecrated still more than in heathen times by this strange alliance with all that ought to be most reverent and least ostentatious."

. . . . . .

Namur

Wednesday, [15th] September, 1852

". . . . . We went to Waterloo yesterday in a hired vehicle of our own. We could not stomach travelling in the boastful, triumphant English four-horse coach, 'The Warrior,' thither. I think that L—— enjoyed his field of battle walk, and the expositions of an old sergeant, who marched us over the ground on which, thirty-seven years ago, he had fought. F—— also seemed to take delight in it. I acquiesced, and for

their sakes was glad. But for my own, hardly. The work of demons was done there, and the world will not cease to lament the results of it to the third and fourth generation. Yet he was a great man, and worthy of all honour and gratitude, who fought for us there. We find that he had died just twenty-four hours before we left the field. Now there is not one great man left in England. It never was so before in the remembrance of anyone. . . . ."

Soon after my father's return to England, in the autumn of 1852, he and my mother decided to settle in London, as residence at Cambridge was clearly unnecessary. They accordingly took a furnished house for the winter, and in April, 1853, moved into their last joint home, 29 Westbourne Terrace, which my father had taken on a lease, and furnished. Here he was able to enjoy a moderate amount of social intercourse with many old friends, though he was still disinclined for much evening visiting, and often suffered from the effects of hot rooms and late dinners. He was as abstemious as ever, and made but a slight pretence of dining at any time.

To his Wife

[*October, 1852*]

". . . . . On Sunday . . . . . in the afternoon I went to Lincoln's Inn Chapel. . . . . We had a sermon from Maurice, a man whose thoughts wear so strange, loose, and cumbrous a dress, that one might as well try to make out the figure of a Turk in full apparel. It seemed to me a very pleasant kind of intellectual

narcotic, that is, the thinking part of the hearers was held in captivity, and made to rejoice in its own bondage, instead of being left to itself, or to play, or to go to sleep. But I doubt whether any of us carried anything away for future use. . . . ."

To H. J. Stephen

[On the sudden death of his Wife]

27th December, 1852

" It would be idle, indeed, my dear Henry, to say to you—Weep not. There is only One who can say that—but I doubt not that He will, ere long, say it. In the very magnitude of your loss, there are the seeds of an inestimable consolation. Her noble, unselfish nature—the high courage with which she clung to hope—the sanctity and the singleness of the foundation on which all her higher hopes rested—the charity which showed itself in every varying form in her life and conversation—the buoyant and invincible hilarity of her spirit—her devotedness to her family, and her zeal in devoting them all to the service of God—though just now the subject of bitter regret, will ere very long become the subject of grateful recollection to you. You will gradually accustom yourself to feel that all the gladness, and health, and strength of the happiest youth would be of incomparably less value than the remembrance of your long and most intimate union with her, and the blessed assurance that during that union she was daily ripening for this great change; and the well-founded belief that her prayers are continually ascending to God for

you and for her children; and the conviction that they are heirs of the mercies promised to the children of the just; and the humble trust that you will one day join in thanksgiving for your common safe deliverance from this sinful world; and the faith (surely not illusive) that, though no longer visible or audible to you, she is still the companion of your sad solitude, sympathising with all your sorrows, and perhaps permitted to minister to the relief of them.

"It is almost fifty years ago since I first saw her; and during all that long period she has been to me, as often as we met, an invariable friend—affectionate, indulgent, forbearing, and teaching by her life, by her looks, her manners, and the tones of her voice, many and many a lesson which her words could never have taught. And now she has left us both to pass the poor fragment of our days. God grant that we may pass it in such a manner as may make us feel not wholly unworthy of the renewal of the personal intercourse which is for the moment suspended. . . . ."

To his Wife

The Palace, Cuddesdon
15th January, 1853

". . . . . Everything here is, if not exactly Puseyite in form, at least Puseyitical, and, in my mind, is much more comely than any other of the forms of worship, though the dangers of that comeliness may be very great. But S. Wilberforce's preaching to a congregation of smock-frocks and school-children is not so much good as perfect. It is incomparably superior to his

admired London performances. He translates into the simplest style and the most effective illustrations, thoughts which, in a different dress, would seem as rich and splendid as those of the most successful masters of this kind of rhetoric. The subject was that of Christ attending at a marriage feast—that is, of His teaching (by His example as well as by His words) the holy science of making all things holy—the impossibility of disuniting the internal and the external life, so as to have the one hallowed and the other unhallowed—the impossibility of hallowing anything except by doing it for Him and in Him—the possibility of hallowing everything by so doing it. Add to these topics the tones, the gestures, the pathos, and the occasional touches of brilliancy which he has at his command, and you have an image of an absolute master of rustic pulpit eloquence. When it is not rustic, but civic, it becomes too ambitious, and conducts him to the region of clouds and mistiness. Why then is it that he is so much gainsaid and distrusted? I think I could tell why—but I had rather not, as I see no good in making the attempt. Only I am quite sure that he is a good deal misunderstood, and a little, or it may be not a little, misrepresented. . . . ."

University Arms Hotel

8th February, 1853

" A whole day passed in examining five boys—big boys indeed—and then in reading their answers. One, Seeley, the bookseller's son, did capitally; and one, (——) did as badly as bad could be. . . . ."

10th or 11th February, 1853

". . . . . What a strange thing it is that the blank of downright helpless inaction should be so very dismal a blank! Why can't one go quietly and contentedly through a fit of nothingness? Because it is not mere nothingness, but a wretched revelation to oneself what a bankrupt one is the moment one cannot draw any longer on things without. . . . ."

To Mrs Austin

23 Sussex Gardens
13th March, 1853

". . . . . Circumstances, and especially the circumstance of our having taken up our abode in this quarter of London, having lately drawn me more than once into the society of Mr Longman, I have been inquisitive with him about Sydney Smith's biography, and I hear from him that you are still engaged upon it; at least that you still retain the hope of finishing it. I do not wonder that you should cling to your purpose, arduous as it is, for it would carry you through many scenes and topics of deep interest. It is one of the advantages of such a task, that there can be scarcely anything of much weight in the mind of the writer for which it will not afford a niche, in the form either of a full discussion or of a passing hint. According to one of his own phrases, in a letter to Lord Ashburton, one has never any difficulty in forming an opinion on a subject one does not understand, and therefore, in my ignorance of your materials, I could readily bestow a great deal of good advice upon you for the execution

of your work; but I limit myself to the single recommendation that you should engage an amanuensis. . . .

". . . . . When I said that we had taken up our abode in this part of London, I was but making an addition the more to the long list of our changes of residence; which, however numerous, have all been dictated by one and the same motive: I mean the necessity of moving from place to place for the benefit of the health of our two younger children. We have been trampers on that account for the last eleven or twelve years, and now, when, by the mercy of God, we find them both at the end of their great and rapid growth, and able to live like other young people, we are endeavouring to bring our wanderings to a close, and have taken the audacious step of engaging and furnishing a house, though not, as you may suppose, without some recollections and anticipations materially different from those with which we did the same thing in years long since passed. But, being once more Londoners, we have resumed a little of our former intercourse with the London world. We have visited your nephew, Henry Reeve, and have been visited by them, and hope to profit by their near neighbourhood. We have occasionally partaken of the hospitalities which it is still the delight of Senior and his wife to show to all varieties of guests of different nations and characters, pursuits and doctrines; but into that epitome of the wide world it does not well suit myself to enter, for I require a more tranquil atmosphere. My wife and daughter, however, breathe very well in it, and there, the other

day, they met your Lucy and her husband, both of whom they were very happy to meet again. From time to time we also fall in with Lord Monteagle and his patriarchal household; with Henry Taylor, who has just finished building his new house, and who constantly improves in gentleness and courtesy as years pass over him; and with Frederick Elliot, whom you and Mr Austin remember among your faithful disciples and friends; to which catalogue I may add the name of poor Carlyle, whom I occasionally visit. He is at present engaged in the work of canonizing Frederick II., and more or less in his habitual task of denouncing the faults and follies of our Jerusalem, without ever speaking comfortably to her. But he is a fine truth-seeking, and falsehood-abhorring, nervous, and cordial person, who would be irresistible, if he had no other attraction than the contrast he maintains to almost everybody else. . . . ."

To his Wife

University Arms Hotel

26th April, 1853

". . . . . God bless you, my dearest wife. Why is it that I trifle thus when I write to you? Not because I am naturally a trifler. . . . . Perhaps it is because I am afraid of being as serious in words as I always am in thoughts and feelings, for the more grave my speech the more grave would be my mind, and I am grave enough and to spare, as you will allow. . . . ."

University Arms Hotel

27th April, 1853

". . . . . Whewell came to my lecture to-day, with some eighty to ninety other folks. I wished him at Labrador, but, as I daresay he slept the thing out (for I did not look at him) perhaps he may have been just as well at Cambridge. . . . ."

A report having reached my father that J. H. Newman had complained of some expressions used in the "Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography,' of which a third edition was about to be published, he writes:

To Henry Wilberforce

11th July, 1853

"I write to ask a favour, which I think you will not refuse me. . . . . If I have in fact written one word respecting Mr Newman which is not in strict conformity to truth, justice, and propriety, I shall be deeply concerned at making that discovery—I shall be eager to retract it, and prompt to make the most unqualified apology to him for it. At present I am wholly unaware that the case is so. The favour I ask of you is to find out for me, if you can, from Mr Newman himself, on what ground it is that he arraigns me as a calumniator. . . . .

". . . . . Don't think me so conceited as to suppose that any censures or praises of mine can be of any importance to a man of Mr Newman's eminence. He is a

man of learning and genius, a profound theologian, and a logician of the extremest subtlety. I am in all those respects what you know me to be.

"That he should have condescended to notice at all any shaft shot from my quiver surprises me; but I am thankful to be thus admonished of the duty of doing what I can to ascertain whether the blow, such as it was, ought not to have been aimed at him, and ought now to be atoned for. God forbid that I should bring, or that having brought I should persist in, a false accusation against any human being, especially against an 'elder,' who has made such sacrifices for conscience' sake, and who has been so bitterly assailed by many foolish men, and by at least one very wicked antagonist. Profoundly as I am convinced that he and you are labouring under errors which, according to my lights, tend to deprive the Gospel of Christ of its chief excellence and glory and healing and invigorating virtue, (forgive my plainness of speech) I shall cleave to the last to the belief, that in the Catholic Church there is a shelter and a home for multitudes of the adherents of the Church of Rome, among which multitudes I am willing to assign a place to none more readily than to those who have quitted fathers and mothers, brethren and friends, and the favour of the world in compliance with what they sincerely, and after much enquiry, believe to be the truth and the Will of God. May He bless all such, and you, my dear old friend, among the number, and teach and unite, and of His infinite mercy in Christ our Redeemer, save and pardon and accept us all."

To Mrs Austin

29 Westbourne Terrace

Saturday, 16th July, 1853

". . . . . I trust your health is improving, and your S. S.* book growing—if, indeed, the last is a wish one ought to indulge for any friend; for there is much truth in the saying, *Qui plume a, guerre a.* Yet it is better to fight than to slumber.

"After I came back from Weybridge last time, I burnt various sheets of paper, forming part of a lecture destined for my pupils at Cambridge, and began it anew. Your husband, without knowing it or suspecting it, had told me that I was shaping a wrong course, and if I ever finish and print what I have since written, he will find there the best expansion which I have been able to make of the ideas which he transfused from his own brain into mine. If he will neither write nor dictate anything, you must at least seduce him as much and as often as you can to talk to those whose fate or whose fancy it is to write. May the gracious Father of us all be his and your Teacher, Guide, and Comforter. This downward slope of life is not without grave incommodities to all of us. We must lighten them as best we may to each other, cheering each other with the hope that He, to whom we are all looking for support, will make them tolerable to us all, and eventually not tolerable merely, but advantageous. . . . ."

* The Life of Sydney Smith, on which Mrs Austin was at that time engaged, which was not, I believe, published.

To John Venn

29 Westbourne Terrace
July, 1853

"Your aunt has brought to a close the happiest life I have ever witnessed, by a death the least painful through which it is possible to pass. To think of her as she was, or as she is, with any feelings but those of gratitude and pleasure, would be in effect to believe that our mortal existence, in its best estate, is not only vanity but wretchedness, a burden and a curse not a blessing. She enjoyed, to its utmost extent, the inheritance promised, even in this world, to the children's children of those who fear and love the Author of that promise, as her holy father feared and loved Him; and you and E——, as her children (for such in almost every sense you have been) have yet another title to that inheritance. I have no condolences for her or for you. God knows that I would receive with boundless thankfulness His summons to follow her to the grave in which you are about to deposit what remains of her on earth, if with that summons could come any reasonable assurance that my children would inherit from me any such patrimony as E—— and you have derived, and are still to derive, from your father, from your aunt, and from her father. But ——. . . . ."

To Mrs Austin

29 Westbourne Terrace
23rd August, 1853

". . . . . It seems to me that Brighton is the most marvellous thing in Europe—not in itself, indeed, but

as a symptom of what is passing in this busy land of ours. In the outskirts of that huge city of the self-enjoying, are growing up new cities for the same purpose. Throughout the whole of Italy, in the two centuries which immediately followed the accession of the Cæsars, no such provision was made for the gratification of those who did not labour, or of those who sought to solace the intervals of labour by a luxurious repose. It affords a measure of the national wealth, and of the unequal distribution of it, which is perfectly stupendous ; and illustrates not less curiously our national tastes and habits. One cannot frame to oneself the ejaculation, *esto perpetua*, without strange misgivings.

"On my way homewards, I fell in with Dr Whewell, just fresh from preparing for the press a new edition of 'Grotius de Jure Belli ac Pacis,' with an English version, notes, and preface—the sport of his vacation somewhere on the Rhine. He regretted his inability to see you and M. Cousin at Weybridge, a few weeks ago, and you may reasonably regret the having missed him. The body, soul, intellect, and energy of him fit beautifully into each other, and make one think meanly of the small scale on which one's own nature was cast. Though, to be sure, a whole world full of Whewells would be a very queer place to live in. . . . ."

To his Wife

29 Westbourne Terrace
5th September, 1853

". . . . . On Sunday I went, in the morning, to our pew. The sermon was—I need not say what. But

the service was exciting—rather too much so. I brought back with me singing ears, and a mind which needed relief. . . . ."

29 Westbourne Terrace

6th September, 1853

" It is mighty pleasant for you to talk of not being anxious about my silence. Silence ! Why, whoever suspected me of that ? My tongue and my pen are, alack, equally loquacious, and if I had broken my leg you may be quite sure that I should have written a long account of it, on the bandages, if no other writing material offered itself. . . . .

" Then I went, guess where ? to Carlyle's, where I found a young American lady (oh dear, I wish one might always praise the Americans without seeing or hearing them), and a young English lady, and Aubrey de Vere. De Vere took to talking about and against England, which I could not stand, so I talked stoutly in its glorification, and in some scorn of Popery and Popes. Carlyle did the like as to the Popes, saying (to my surprise and sorrow) that he (Carlyle) did not care a rush for the difference between the two religions—I suspect he meant the two superstitions."

. . . . . .

29 Westbourne Terrace

8th September, 1853

". . . . . My letter writing gifts are like my talking gifts, proof that the surface of my mind peels off easily, which, as you know, is not the case when the substance is hard and the texture firm. . . . .

". . . . . I walked to Maurice's house, and finding that he will be in London on Monday, I asked to see him then. My object is to give him some advice about the scrape into which he has got. I feel a deep interest in him. . . . ."

29 Westbourne Terrace

10th September, 1853

". . . . . My tongue is on furlough, or vacation. Yet this mode of existence is not without some advantages. It brings me into closer intimacy with myself, and after an acquaintance of sixty years and upwards, there is still much to be done for the improvement of my knowledge of that venerable personage. It brings to my remembrance many forgotten motives for many apparently contradictory feelings, gratitude, confidence, hope, and submission on the one hand; penitence, self-distrust, anxiety and fear on the other: which, however, are not real contradictions, but the elements which must combine in all men, and I suppose in all women, to make up the strange compound 'me.' . . . ."

29 Westbourne Terrace

10th September, 1853

". . . . . As to the drawing and singing and history-knowing of the rising generation of the hard-fisted Commons of this realm, I can only say, that if it goes on much further, I must emigrate to some new country, or to some new world, to find myself once again among my equals, and must sit under some lecturer instead of myself presuming to lecture. . . . ."

Great Malvern

17th September, 1853

". . . . . Of course —— [his sister] will urge my return —common civility could do no less. But it must be urged on such a plan and in such a way as to make it clear that I shall put nobody out of her or his way: nobody, that is, of more significance than a big boy. . . . . There is no relation in life so intimate as to supersede the need for a large measure of ceremoniousness."

27th December

". . . . . Many boys coming to be certificated and examined. One gentleman has been with me now three times, and three times has failed to answer the question, 'Tell me anything you know?' or any other of my questions. 'What,' I asked, 'is your plan of life?' 'I mean to take orders.' 'How long have you been here?' 'Four years, having lost one by missing my Little Go.' 'Then you must lose another by missing my certificate.' And to this dunce and idler the Church of England is to confide the training of immortal souls for a bliss or a woe which the same Church believes to be eternal. In charity to the Church, I must believe that, in avowing that belief, she tells a falsehood. If not, what is her responsibility? But who, and what, and where is 'She?' I hope Sam Wilberforce and Co. can tell, for they are always talking about 'her.' . . . . ."

The following correspondence with Mr Carlyle explains itself; and I think my object in printing it

will be understood without more words. I also print a somewhat similar letter to an old friend, with whom my father had probably, on the whole, less sympathy; the implied rebuke, however, left, at any rate, no lasting estrangement, if indeed it had not (as I have some reason to think) the opposite effect.

To Thomas Carlyle

29 Westbourne Terrace
15th October, 1853

"My dear Mr Carlyle,—When we parted the other day at the fork of the roads which were to conduct you and me to our respective homes, you dropped half-a-dozen words, which I doubt not you have entirely forgotten, though they have left a deep impression on my own mind—so deep an impression that I cannot help writing to you on the subject, although I may be interfering with the progress of the monument of Frederick II., and irritating his *manes*.

"I am, however, unable to quote the *ipsissima verba* to which I refer. The substance alone remains with me. To your remark that the Church of England was nothing else than a vast machinery for maintaining religious decorums, I had answered in effect that I knew many, and worshipped in public with many, to whom, as far as I could judge, it was a reality; and that, though the pews were filled with crowds of comfortable-looking folks, who called themselves 'miserable sinners,' yet that, making all reasonable allowances for the effects of habit, and for

the impossibility of maintaining any high-toned feelings for any great length of time, the congregations which I usually frequent seemed to me to be at least sincere in their use of the Anglican Liturgy, though it was a sincerity that did not lead them to any great depth or elevation of piety. I daresay I am making for myself a prettier speech than I really spoke; but, be that as it may, your reply to it was, if not exactly in the following words, yet certainly to the following effect—'Well! I believe that, after all, you think on these subjects as I do.'

"And why should such words leave on my mind any impression either painful or deep? Why should I be startled to be told that on religious questions of any kind my judgment is in coincidence with yours? Why should your holding that opinion sound to me like a proof that I have been guilty of some want of integrity and plain-dealing in the intercourse which you have had the kindness to allow me to maintain with you? I will attempt to tell you why.

"What your theological tenets may be, I do not know, and I do not presume to enquire. I am told that they are more clearly explained in your 'Life of Sterling,' than in any other of your works; but it has happened (I hardly know how) that it is almost the only part of your writings with which I am not acquainted. I am also told, that in that book you announce yourself as dissentient from the Christian Creed, even in those articles of it which are accepted, if not universally, at least generally, among all the Churches into which Christendom is divided; or

more briefly, in those articles which are brought together in what is called the Apostles' Creed. Though this may be a misrepresentation of your doctrines, I cannot suppose it to be very wide of the fact. I have always conjectured, and do now suppose, that your non-assent or dubiety ranges over an extensive field, and that on the subject of the Christian revelation, your negative is far more complete than your positive belief. Thinking so, I am accustomed to ascribe to many of your words, spoken or written, a sense which perhaps may not rightly belong to them, and to regard as sceptical, when proceeding from your tongue or pen, various expressions to which, if they had a different origin, I should attach no such meaning.

"And what then? Is it my province to rebuke your doubts? or to attempt to remove them? I hope not. I am at least sure that it is a province in which I should be beset by innumerable difficulties, even if I were disposed to take you for my penitent, and you would accept me as your confessor—and even if you would do me that honour, I should be sorely troubled how to deal with you. I dare not censure another for avowing difficulties which I myself have so often felt, though so seldom avowed. I cannot undertake to combat objections, at the root of which is probably lying a large amount of knowledge, historical and philosophical, of which I am destitute.

"Or should I stand aloof from you because you are unsettled in your judgment, or wrong in your judgment, on these all-important questions? Am I bound to deprive myself of the honour of your

good-will, and of the pleasure of your society, because you think of them in a manner which I have been taught from my cradle to these grey hairs of mine to condemn as erroneous and full of danger? I trust not. I know of no authoritative precept directly commanding such a sacrifice, and I can perceive no probable advantage recommending it.

"Am I, then, at liberty to leave you to suppose that your religious theories are, in my estimate, a matter of no serious account? Am I free to allow you to conclude that, though veiled under more decorous forms of speech, my own are, in substance, the same—so that if you and I could hit upon some phraseology common to us both, we should find ourselves at one as to the opinions to be expressed in it? It seems to me that I should be a coward and a knave if I did anything to cherish that belief in you, or if I did not do what I can to remove it. Hence this present writing.

"Although I have been disavowing the skill to act as confessor to you, I seem to be calling on you to assume that character towards myself. Be not, however, alarmed. My confession is not about to be very minute, nor, as I trust, of any great length.

"I begin by acknowledging the propensity, the infirmity, or the fault, which indisposes me to hoist any religious colours in the common intercourse of life. Whether it be shyness, or delicacy, or sympathy, or a sense of fitness and propriety, or a mixture of all these, I find my lips closed upon the thoughts and feelings in which the soul of religion consists, except

when I converse with those of whose sympathy respecting them I am well assured.

"I next plead guilty to the habit of acquiescing silently in many intimations of opinion from which I entirely dissent; for controversial discourse is my abhorrence, and seems to me as profitless as it is unpleasant.

"Further, I fear I must accuse myself of the disposition to acquiesce, not silently but openly, in whatever I suppose to be truly uttered, even though I may know, or conjecture, that it is a truth from which the speaker deduces, and means me to deduce, inferences from which I dissent. For I am, I fear, too indolent to abound in the cautions against a possible or probable misunderstanding of my assent, which may, at times, be wanting. I am unwilling to interrupt the flow of discourse, and I have learnt to see that, as there is in all men, however wicked, something which may be made the basis of improvement, so there is in all men, however heterodox, some true and sound doctrine which may be made the basis of an advance in wisdom. I am accustomed to think, or to feel, that I am no more bound to wage war against all the errors which I perceive, or suspect, in my associates, than I am bound to be pointing out to them, and censuring, all the bad tempers or unruly appetites of which I may have reason to surmise that they are the victims.

"For all these reasons put together, or for other reasons which my self-love may conceal from me, I may not unlikely have given you the impression,

that between my religious views and your own, the distinctions were rather verbal and nominal than substantial and real. Now, if I rightly divine what your views are, you are much in error in supposing that mine have any correspondence with them.

"What, then, are my views? A question, indeed, for a confessor! a penance, indeed, for a penitent to make a clear answer! a dismal perplexity and perturbation for them both. To make a clean breast of it, I should have to write an autobiography—to tell of opinions inherited—of the diversities between the paternal and maternal inheritance—of the friends of my youth who, one after another, went down into the grave in the full maturity of the Christian life, and of the Christian faith—of the friends of my later years, in whom the ripening of that faith was a tardy and imperfect process—of many books read, which all in turn left me still to search—of the vicissitudes of life, which taught me much not to be found (or not to be found by me) in any books—of Biblical studies and meditations—of habitual exercises of devotion, public, domestic, and private—of the reaction on my own mind of the lessons I had to convey to my children—and of influences silently, imperceptibly, yet progressively, exerting themselves over my interior self, which more than parents or children, or friends, or books, or meditations, have wrought that self into a persuasion (that is, a heart-conviction) from which, in this life, I can never now be divorced—a persuasion that the Bible, or rather the greater part of it, is, in some real though undefinable sense, the Word of

God—the persuasion that, between the life and death of Jesus Christ and our own reconciliation to God, there is an indispensable, though (I confess) a perfectly inexplicable relation—a persuasion that there is a Divine Presence to be invoked by prayer, to be repelled by sensuality, and to be restored to the heart by repentance and amendment—the persuasion of a real, though wholly incomprehensible, intimacy (amounting almost to unity) of life, and being, and nature between parents and their children, and their more remote posterity—the persuasion thence resulting of an ancestral corruption of our whole race—and the persuasion that, by the adoption of our nature, Jesus Christ has broken the otherwise indissoluble bonds which link us all to sin, and to sorrow, the child of sin.

"To draw out this creed of mine into any series of dogmatical propositions—to vindicate the several parts of it argumentatively—to repel the objections by which argument might assail some parts of it—or to diffuse and propagate it to other minds by anything I could say or do,—all this is quite beyond my power. My convictions are, I know, less strong than my persuasions. I am living, or trying to live, more under the guidance of an invisible hand, and under the impulse of indefinable motives, than in submission to any logic, or body of evidences, or weight of authority. If I were of the Society of John Wesley, I should say I am living by my experiences; and I do not know that a more apt or wise phraseology could be found to express what I take to be the common condition

of the minds of men, and what I know to be the condition of my own mind.

"I beseech you to do me the justice to believe that this *Confessio Fidei* is not made without great reluctance. I have faults and sins infinitely too many and too great to be capable of deliberately and needlessly adding to them the fault and sin of exhibiting myself to you, or to any man, as a model for anything that is wise, or good, or praiseworthy. My creed has for its foundation, superstructure, and summit the sense of unworthiness—of my own personal and individual unworthiness. But yet I think myself bound, for the reasons I have stated at the outset, to tell you, as distinctly as I can, that however remote I may be from the character of a Christian, I am bound by links stronger than death to Him from whom that holy name is derived—that if there be any, the very slightest, weight due to any judgment or authority of mine, that weight is on the side of Christianity, and not against it—that if you are really a dissentient from the Christian faith, I at least can give no support or countenance to that dissent.

"You will, I trust, forgive my imposing on you the trouble of reading (if indeed you shall read) this long letter, and accept it as some proof of the confidence I repose in your candour, and of the hearty desire I entertain to promote, if possible, your highest interests, and at least to do and say nothing which could by possibility impair them. For, entrusted as you are with a vast influence over the age to which you belong, and therefore over future generations,

you are to be regarded as one of those vessels set apart for sacred uses, the unsullied brightness of which was to be maintained and reverenced by all who worshipped in the Temple.

"I am, my dear Mr Carlyle

"Ever most truly yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

From Mr Carlyle

Chelsea, 16th October, 1853

"Dear Sir James,—You are infinitely gentle, polite, and considerate with your fellow-creatures,—and I altogether retract that unguarded phrase of mine, which, indeed, I had forgotten as soon as uttered, and which you now must do me the kindness to forget. It is certain I never could have meant more by it than that you agreed with me in recognizing the divine and awful meaning of real religion, and the horrible condition into which the highest interest is reduced amongst us at present, that the *soul* of your 'religion' was analogous to the *soul* of mine, however much their respective *embodiments* might differ. This is all I could have meant, or shall ever presume to mean, on such a matter. And so again I say,—Have the goodness to expunge the phrase, and let it not stand upon the record at all.

"You will find nothing of theological in that '*Life of Sterling*' that I know of; only an emphatic assertion here and there (too emphatic such conviction can hardly be, though I own the assertion of it may be inconveniently so) that a man ought not to do

Playactorisms before High Heaven, nor preach what he does not himself completely believe;—nor, in fact, I grieve to say, will that poor rag of a book (which was a votive offering rather than a bit of literature) repay your perusal under any point of view—except at a very idle time indeed! My 'religious creed' is not stated there, nor, as you say, would it be easy to state; and you must further do me the justice to believe that it is not *skepsis*, or doubt, any more, for these last thirty years; but a *certainty* with me, for which I also am, and ought to be, for ever thankful to the Maker of me.

"And so we will not awaken 'sleeping dog-kennels' (whatever our friend the Archdeacon may advise), but will, if you please, meet again for another long walk *sub dio*, or long talk within four walls, in a sitting posture; and indeed if you do not, about the end of the week, come down to us here, I design to go up to you yonder—upon the principle of Mahomet's miracle, the only sound principle in these cases!

"I can with great truth subscribe myself always

"Yours with great respect and goodwill

"T. CARLYLE."

To a Friend

29 Westbourne Terrace
21st October, 1853

"My dear ——

"Ever since I left your house last night, an irresistible impulse to write to you has had possession of me.

"It is my disposition, my infirmity, or my fault, to shrink from all controversy, and most of all from religious controversy. I often listen silently to much from which I dissent, and I not seldom avow my concurrence in what appears to me to be truth, although it be obviously spoken with a view to inferences which I hold to be false. Although I think I could in general vindicate this practice, I fear that I sometimes pursue it to an extent not to be vindicated. It appears to me that it has probably led you and —— to suppose that my Christianity is but an outer garment, worn for the sake of decorum in public, but laid aside in private.

"If such were *not* your and his opinion, you would not, I think, have spoken as you did of the guiltlessness of the Roman Procurator who condemned Christ to die, of the worthlessness and poverty of the Book of Psalms, of the superiority to them of some prayers in Apuleius, of your own ability to extemporise sacred songs of equal value (of which you gave a specimen), of the Psalms being but a variety of the Irish form of eloquence, and of the Scriptures of the Old Testament being nothing but a comparatively modern composition by Ezra,—and so on. I am sure that neither you nor —— would intentionally give me any needless pain. You therefore thought that your avowal of such views would not be painful to me. You supposed that such language would not wound the loyalty which I profess to feel to Christ as my Lord and Saviour. You judged that such loyalty, though occasionally

dwelling on my pen or on my lips, had no settled abode in my heart.

"Now I should shun, as a base hypocrite, any man of whom I entertained such an opinion. If I were conscious of being such a hypocrite myself, I should at least have grace enough to be the object of my own hearty self-contempt.

"If, from anything you have ever seen in me, you have concluded that I am not, in the most absolute sincerity, a believer in the whole Christian system, I must have unwarily conducted you to a total mistake respecting me. It is with unspeakable reluctance that I ever unveil my interior life to any human being save one; but I feel myself constrained to say to you, that to maintain and cherish the relations which bind us to our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, by acts of devotion, and by the study of the sacred books, and especially of the Book of Psalms, is her and my daily habit, as it is, so far as our influence extends, the daily habit of our household. This avowal is drawn from me in spite of myself.

"I know very indistinctly what your own theological opinions are. —— makes no secret of his. I judge no man. My business is with myself; and my conscience tells me that I am not free to listen, without a grave protest, to such discourse as that to which I refer. I ought, perhaps, to have made it at once. If I erred in not doing so, I will at least avoid persevering in an omission which I feel would be both culpable and dastardly.

"Ever yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

Dr Whewell sent to my father the proof sheets of his "Plurality of Worlds," and the following are some of the comments sent in reply. I fear that the series is not quite complete, and unfortunately none of Dr Whewell's letters have been preserved.

To Dr Whewell

18th October, 1853

"My dear Sir,—Suppose that since the creation of our race until now, an atmosphere like that on which I am now looking had rendered the heavenly bodies invisible to us, what theories should we have had about the causes of day and night, of heat and cold, of light and darkness, of summer and winter? What speculations about the existence of any exterior world or worlds—what contempt or persecution for any poor philosopher who had ventured to teach that the earth was but a secondary body, moving round a sphere a million times as large as itself, and belonging to a stellar system so immense as to elude all attempts to express the magnitude or remoteness of its more distant parts. What an earth-bound theology would have expanded itself under the pall of that moist and misty sky;—how unrivalled would have been the god of the mountains, of the clouds, of the ocean;—how destitute the language and the thoughts of men of any reference to the God of Heaven. Paley's natural theology might have been much what it is, except, indeed, that his readers must have been told how it came to pass that all the moral attributes of the Deity were exerting themselves on a field so narrow, and for

the most part with so much apparent ill success—the Bible being (to complete my hypothesis) pruned of those pages which refer to the heavenly bodies. How severe the trial of faith to those who read it under the impervious vapours concealing those bodies from our eyes, with imaginations unfed, and hopes unsustained, by the actual sight of external worlds. Their belief in a future life, to be passed in a nobler dwelling place, and in a purer state of being, would have been at best a cold conviction, not an animating persuasion. Seeing nothing of immensity, they would have conceived nothing of eternity; and the love of God (as Butler interprets the words) would have been, not a possession of the whole intellect and soul in their utmost strength and tension, but a sentiment clouded with doubt, unstable and irreverent.

"But God said, 'Let there be light,' (material light) 'and there was light,' (moral, mental, religious, and spiritual.) The dark canopy of mist was rolled away, not merely, or chiefly, to give us a measure of time, a pathway across the ocean, and so on, but that 'the heavens might declare the glory of God,' and proclaim to us His unutterable and inconceivable majesty, and teach us to adore the power, the wisdom, and the love, of which we could not but presume that those countless orbs were the theatre—bidding us at least to pause in narrowing the operation of those Divine attributes within the petty sphere of this poor fallen, dying, enigmatical globe of ours.

"Of worlds 'not in space,' that is, not inhabited by beings united to material bodies, but by beings

existing only as so many congeries of thoughts and affections unlocalised, we have, I think, no intimation, and no conception. 'The spiritual body' is a *body* still. For the reception of it some dwelling place is indispensable. For the right exercise of its high faculties, a dwelling of vast extent and boundless variety seems at least to be requisite.

"That spiritual beings walk the earth we may well believe, for it is but to believe in the grossness of our organs of perception; but 'they walk it'—traverse it from place to place—perhaps to fathom some of its secrets unfathomable to us, perhaps to perform offices impossible to us; but hardly to explore the workings of the Divine hand, or the movements of the Divine will, as they are manifested in the globes around us. On these workings and movements there must, one supposes, be some present created intelligence to meditate.

"Between the world in which we are living, and the world in which we hope to live, there must, of course, be some connection. To place the Christian Elysium or Hades in some adjacent world is, I feel, to invite and cherish a mere day-dream, of the correspondence of which with the reality we cannot reasonably suppose anything.

"But whatever and wherever may be the 'heaven' of which we speak so volubly, it would hardly be a heaven if it should disclose to its inhabitants an eternity of existence without at the same time revealing to them such works and ways of the Creator as would furnish an eternal study, or eternally new

delight, and an eternal succession of continually expanding thoughts. The universe, such as the telescope exhibits it, and such as the popular notion peoples it, seems indispensable to the imagination, and to the heart, as a meet temple for Deity, and for such as shall be worthy to approach, to adore, and to serve Him.

"It may not immediately and directly affect me to know or to believe that there are other worlds, the inhabitants of which receive the efflux of the Divine goodness which is withholden from myself and my fellow-men; but it affects me much to know or to believe that better and happier worlds than this are rolling within the precincts of the Divine mercy; because that knowledge or belief aids me in supposing that the things among which I now live are exceptional and transitory, and form not a normal, but an imperfect and distorted, manifestation of Him with whom we have to do.

"Before the modern views of the stellar universe were established, Christian thinkers did not, I presume, feel the need of any other peopled regions to complete their view of God, so far as it could be completed. But was not this because they believed in the almost boundless infinitude of earth? and because, in the absence of all celestial measurements or mechanics, the mind ranged at will through the illimitable regions of space hidden from human observation by the revolving firmanent? and because their minds, like our own, craving for repose, acquiesced in what seemed to them invincible ignorance, and made the best of it?

"On behalf of my clients, the inhabitants of the extra terrestrial universe, I am pleading, like some of my old Bar associates: 'Gentlemen of the Jury,—Before you give credit to that evidence, think on the misery which your verdict of guilty must inflict on the prisoner's family.' If the learned logician had said, not 'Be incredulous, lest you should give pain,' but 'Be cautious where your error might lead to such painful consequences,' he would not have been so far wrong. It is in this latter sense that I oppose to your terrible artillery (for I acknowledge myself to be much alarmed by it) this and my other outcries for a full consideration of the possible consequences of battering down the walls against which it is directed.

"Ever most truly yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

To Dr Whewell

24th October, 1853

"My dear Sir,—After reading pp. 225—240, I can only say this is strangely ingenious, and eloquent, and beautiful, but (to my own feelings at least) hardly less unwelcome and depressing. The evil existing in this world, which our reason is so utterly unable to reconcile with the perfection of the Creator, passes with us at present for a local disease in the creation. This is indeed taken for granted, with no sufficient grounds, or rather, in defiance of many indications to the contrary. But the darkness favours the expansion of a faith and a hope which are essential to love. If

I am constrained to accept the opinion that this world is the one inhabited spot in the universe, or if I may not rationally cherish the opposite opinion, how can I ascribe to the Divine Author of all things power, wisdom, and benevolence in the highest conceivable degree? In ascribing those attributes to One whose *only* moral, intellectual, and spiritual workmanship has been a wreck from the beginning, and is tending to a yet more fatal wreck, shall I not really be that coward flatterer of superior power which Bentham, and some of his disciples, accuse us of being? How may I escape the Manichean conclusion that 'the prince of this world' is indeed a potentate who, in the moral creation at least, balances or overpowers the antagonist rule?

"But is not Truth to be worshipped with unbounded reverence, and to be pursued at all risks? Ten thousand times yes, if we are living under the reign of truth, of wisdom, of holiness, and of love. But if it were not almost impious to reason, even hypothetically, upon the opposite assumption, I know not why, on that assumption, we should be caring for truth, or for anything else. The origin of evil, that great dismal problem of our mortal existence, presses sorely enough on us as it is, while yet we can indulge in dreams of orbs upon orbs innumerable, where evil is unknown. Awaken us from those dreams, and will not the pressure become almost intolerable?

"Perhaps not. It may be that some constitutional melancholy in my own nature gives to the aspect of things a deeper shade than really belongs to it. I see

that most men, indeed that all men (myself included) are invulnerable, or nearly so, to the keenest shafts which logic can direct against their sanguine self-confidence. We are each treading the narrow way (ourselves being the judges,) while we are each avowing our creed that few there be that find it. Darken the prospect around us and before us to the utmost possible degree, and we shall still go on, believing against belief, and hoping against hope. There is, in the inner soul of man, something which rescues him from all convictions fatal to his peace. This being so, perhaps even the depopulation of all the extra-territorial universe will leave us all as busy and as gay as ever; or if here and there a spirit more pre-disposed to forebode evil than good, more skilful in discerning the dark than the bright side of things, may be tempted to regret that this planet could not be unpeopled also, yet even he will amuse himself with writing lectures on French history, or with some other toy, and will repel care by narcotics. . . . .

". . . . . Pray do not trouble yourself to answer what I write. Your time is of far too much value for it; besides, I have been only repeating myself in a new form of words. In fact, I feel myself guilty of a kind of absurdity, in thus pursuing with criticisms a book which, in all its topics, mundane or extra-mundane, rises and ranges so far beyond my knowledge, while it indicates at every page the height and the compass of the knowledge of its author.

"I am, my dear Sir, very truly yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

To Dr Whewell

1st November, 1853

". . . . . To conceive of Deity as actually present, and as acting at each instant of time, and at each point of space, so as to be the veritable conductor of all movements, from their commencement to their close —does it not involve some formidable consequences? For example, does it not make Him subservient to the volitions of the whole animated creation, whether these volitions be good or bad? Dare we say that the Divine Hand impelled the knife with which Damiens attempted his regicide, or gave efficiency to the instruments of torture under which he suffered? or that when one beast lacerates and slowly consumes another, that scene of agony is brought about by the direct intervention of the Supreme Ruler? In popular discourse we call those events 'providential,' which seem to us to prevent, or to cure, or to mitigate sorrow, or tend to induce some positive benefit; and the man who was prevented the other day from embarking on the ship which was wrecked off Beachy Head, called his escape "providential.' To have spoken in that manner of the embarkation of the family who were drowned in her, would have shocked a common feeling or prejudice. Such feelings or prejudices, however, are noticeable in so far as they show that our minds cherish the love of God by consciously abstaining from all words and all thoughts which would ascribe to Him any interposition in those material acts or movements which we are constrained to contemplate with aversion or abhorrence.

In this almost universal instinct do we not trace His bidding? Ought the notion of the universal agency of the Divine mind on all the movements of Nature to be stated so broadly as to include such movements as are requisite to accomplishing the volitions of all subordinate agents? or if it be stated in such terms as to exclude all that is done by inferior wills within the range of their free agency, who shall attempt to determine the compass of that exception? Turn which way we will, the great problem of the origin of evil is still there to perplex all speculations as to the nature, the ways, and the works of the Creator. It is easy to overleap, but impossible to overlook it.

"Is it the fact that we have fewer difficulties, true or imaginary, to encounter, in supposing God to be the real Doer of all that is done, by an eternal succession of volitions operating through all space, than by supposing a single volition, which ordained throughout all the regions of the material universe, a constant obedience to a code of immutable laws? To the mere imagination, the latter is, perhaps, the nobler theory of the two. To the reason, either theory, and indeed all theories to account for the influence or control of mind over matter, may be alike embarrassing. Faith comes to the aid of our feeble powers, imaginative and rational, with her submissive and adoring cry, 'Verily Thou art a God that hidest Thyself;' and I doubt whether we shall ever make any real advance beyond that point, until faith shall have dissipated the mists and unveiled the realities by

which we are surrounded—a victory which, in this life, is but faintly achieved, even by the holiest and the wisest.

"Ever very truly yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

To Dr Whewell

7th November, 1853

"My dear Sir,—. . . . . On the book as a whole I have already said, perhaps even too freely, what has occurred to me. I shall be much surprised if it does not make a strong impression on all its readers, and give birth to much criticism, written and spoken. I will mention only one cavil, which, however unjust, must, I think, be anticipated. Whether it ought to be cared for, or averted, I do not pretend to judge.

"I think that, if this book is published without a name, and without a protest against any such inference, there will be those who will persuade themselves, and try to persuade others, that the writer of it is not a believer in Revelation. Totally unreasonable as such an inference may be, it will, I believe, be drawn; chiefly because the habits and the conventional tone of this age demand of all our teachers some explicit avowal of what they think of the Gospel of Christ, whenever they occupy the conterminous regions of enquiry; and the concluding pages, from 333 to 347, and especially the final sentence of all, will be supposed by the 'Westminster Review,' and such like persons, to mean—'Philosophy has but faint and

indistinct hopes to give of a better state of things hereafter, so by all means let the unphilosophical multitude who *can* draw such hopes from their Bibles, betake themselves to that solace; only let it not be forgotten that there philosophy takes her leave of them, and disclaims all responsibility for the dreams in which they indulge, and for the disappointment which may await them.'

"That such a censure would be quite unwarranted by what you have written, I am as thoroughly convinced as you can be; but that it will be pronounced by several of your critics, and admitted by many of their readers, and that, too, not in bad faith, but in honest blundering, seems to me highly probable. If you think the risk unreal or contemptible, there is an end of it. If you think, as I do, that it would be well to avoid giving such offence to the weak, a few brief but emphatic words in the preface might re-assure them.

"I am, my dear sir, very truly yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

CHAPTER VII

1854—1857

WESTBOURNE TERRACE—HAILEYBURY

Letters to J. F. Stephen, H. Taylor, Mrs Carlyle, Mrs Austin, T. B. Macaulay, H. Melvill, Miss Venn, Archdeacon Allen

THERE is nothing to show to whom the following fragment of a letter was addressed; but I think it is too characteristic to be omitted:—

29 Westbourne Terrace
19th April, 1854

". . . . . I wonder whether Adam was a logician, and whether we inherit from him, as one of the penalties of the fall, the besetting sin of ergotage? Let but a consequence legitimately emerge out of any undoubted premises, and there are those who follow it to the abyss, plunging into any extravagance, absurdity, or enormity to which it may conduct them. To myself it always seems that the quick sensibility of my instincts was given to counterbalance the torpor and the darkness of my understanding; and when the voice of nature within me is at war with my reasonings, I hold it to be reasonable to reject the conclusions to which my reason would lead me. When I am told that Alexander VI., or Innocent III., or John XXIII.

was the Vicar of Christ upon earth, I am constrained, by the indestructible constitution of my mind, to disbelieve it, even though the chain which connected that opinion with inspired sentences of Holy Writ were composed of what would seem links of adamant. So of the Christianity of the persecutors in France, Spain, and Portugal, Italy, Southern Germany, and the Netherlands. The early Christians were indeed subjected to many vile reproaches, but, as far as we know, they were mere calumnies. Is it a calumny that thanksgivings were offered at Rome for the St. Bartholomew, and that to this day you may see at the Vatican the medal, or an impress of the medal, struck in honour of that unutterable crime? Did the priests or priestesses of Egypt, of Paphos, or of Rome ever perpetrate such guilt? Did Domitian ever commit against the early Christians offences to be compared with those which the See of Rome, and her ministers and agents, committed from age to age against those whom they regarded as erring Christians? The Catholic Church, you admit, has something about her which provokes the very utmost of abhorrence in some. What is that something? Is it not blood-guiltiness of a kind, and of an amount, of which the records of the civilized world have no other example? . . . . ."

To his Wife

University Arms Hotel
9th May, 1854

" A musical performance at King's College to-day has reduced my audience from seventy to thirty. So

I might as well have worked less for their edification. However, I do not think that to be applauded is the spring which sets me to work so hard. It is rather 'the nature of the beast,' than anything else. . . . ."

University Arms Hotel

25th May, 1854

" Yesterday we had a large College dinner party—that is, more to eat and more to drink, and more eaters and drinkers than usual. But nothing, multiplied by a thousand, will still be nothing ; and dullness is not the less dull because there is a larger quantity of it. . . . ."

Westbourne Terrace

17th July, 1854

". . . . . The Pilgrim has not, apparently, been losing much flesh in scaling the Hill Difficulty, or in fighting Apollyon, or in persecutions in Vanity Fair, or under the hands of Giant Despair, or in the gloom of Doubting Castle. He is a fine, stout, cheerful plump man of 40 and something; full of knowledge, of mental activity, and of a good-humoured acquiescence in doing nothing and in being nothing. Altogether a very notable state of mind, wiser perhaps and happier than if he were as impatient as some people, who shall be nameless, of repose and inaction. Yet I think he is one of the offshoots of civilization run wild : a kind of superfluity, though not, I guess, altogether useless to the rest of the world ; and of great use to his own wife and child, and enjoying

himself, and so adding to the sum-total of the inoffensive satisfactions of a dissatisfied world. All good be with his new house and its inmates ! . . . . ."

Westbourne Terrace
18th July, 1854

". . . . . I am, in fact, too serious to be serious: as your grandfather was too light-hearted to be anything else. Judging of the rest of the world by myself, as in fact all men do judge, I am disposed to think that the real true and hidden man, and the apparent, visible, and audible man, are often direct contrasts, and almost always bad likenesses of each other. Yet this is not hypocrisy or wilful deceit. The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger does not intermeddle with its joy, and if there be one thing above all other things which recommends a devout life to a wise man, it is that it places him continually in the presence of Him to whom all hearts are open, and from whom no secrets are hidden; of Him with whom, and with whom alone, there is a perfect and unrestrained confidence. And yet, if it be possible for anyone to be more completely open and unreserved with a fellow-creature than I habitually am, and have been all these years, with you, it must be a strange intimacy indeed. . . . ."

Westbourne Terrace
19th July, 1854

". . . . . I have set about reading Milman's 'Latin Christianity,'—a stout attempt to do an impossibility—that is, to write a history of the Church in the West

down to the times of the Reformation; an impossibility, because no wit of man can weave into any one connected, and continuous, and single narrative, such a throng of events which have nothing in common to them all, save that they all relate to persons ecclesiastical. I know Milman too well to have the proper relish for his writings. Authors and preachers should be locked up, like the Great Llama. The imagination might worship them, if the memory would give permission, but when the nose and chin of the real man creep out of the mask of the writer, you feel that it *is* a mask, and cease to have patience with it. . . . ."

Westbourne Terrace
21st July, 1854

"Yesterday, I called on a Madame M——, a friend of N——'s, because N. wished me to be civil to the lady, who had proposed to give me some rare books about the history of France. Madame is a vivacious, ugly old Frenchwoman (born and bred in England, and of English parents, however, but Frenchified by a marriage and a long residence in Paris,) and she was very courteous, and rather disagreeably clever. Excess of cleverness is a great fault in man or woman. . . . ."

The following letters to Fitzjames refer to a project for my brother's becoming the Editor of the "Christian Observer":

To J. F. S.

Penmaenmawr, Conway
2nd August, 1854

". . . . . Though I do not very distinctly understand what the theology is to which you object, nor what

the theology is to which you adhere, yet, as you consider it as involving some direct dissent from the theology of the 'C. O.,' your uncle would consider, and ought to consider, such a dissent as an unanswerable difficulty.

"For my own part I adhere, with no qualification of which I am conscious, to the theological views of my old Clapham friends and connections. You, I suppose, are an adherent of Mr Maurice. To myself it appears that he is nothing more than a great theological rhetorician, in that his only definite and appreciable meaning is that of wedding the Gospel to some form of Philosophy, and so to conceal its baldness. But Paul of Tarsus, many ages ago, forbade the banns. The 'foolishness' which he had the hardihood to ascribe to his doctrines, must *(me judice)* be foolishness to the end of the chapter. The revelation of Jesus Christ seems to me to be a series of δογματα which sternly resist all attempts to clothe them with the fine draperies of man's wit or wisdom. I accept them as so many impenetrable and inexplicable *arcana*, and regard the solutions of Maurice as an attempt just as vain as those of Robert Wilberforce.

"I am not about to argue this question, or any other question, with you. I mean only to explain in what sense it is that I should deprecate as distinctly, though not perhaps as earnestly, as your uncle, any infusion of the Maurician theories into the 'C.O.' I have a great latitude of allowance for the theological errors of honest men. But it would be decidedly dishonest and false for any man to take that editorial pen

in hand who had drawn his views from Maurice, or from any other such (if there be any other such) teacher. Therefore, if I am right in my conjectures as to the kind of theology which you have adopted, there must, I apprehend, be an end of the question.

"Only let me say that you are not yet ripe for the adoption of any such creed—I mean for the final adoption of it. You are still a very young man, and you have never made these matters the subject either of systematic study, or of extensive observation. Still, so long as such is your creed, you are not qualified to be the editor of an 'evangelical' review.

"Let that, therefore, pass. We are not, God be praised, under any temptation to make shipwreck of conscience for a little money, and I trust that we have integrity enough to resist any such temptation, even if thousands, or millions, and not hundreds, were at stake.

"I am, however, disposed to offer myself as the editor, and to employ you as the sub-editor, to do all the hard work—an office which I do not see why you should not fulfil. It would render you responsible for nothing, save the punctual getting up of the work. I should feel myself well and uprightly employed in advocating the opinions of the school in which I was born and bred.

"Of course all the profits would be yours as long as I could manage the business.

"Tell me quite honestly, and, if possible, tell me before the end of this week, whether you would like such a partnership with me, or rather, such an

employment under me. I can well suppose that it might not suit you, that you might think such a relation to me oppressive and inconvenient, and tending to uncomfortable results. If so, let there be an end of that scheme also. . . . ."

To J. F. S.

Penmaenmawr, Conway

8th August, 1854

"I surmise that there is not very much real difference of judgment between us as to the creeds which you and I maintain, though we do not fall into the same line of discourse or expression about them. It seems to me quite easy to have a theological theory complete and systematic enough for use, and scarcely possible to reach such a theory with any view to speculation—easy, I mean, and scarcely possible, for the unlearned, to which class I completely belong. The learned are, I trust and hope, far more fixed and comprehensive in their views than they seem to me to be; but if I dared trust to my own observation, I should say that they are determined to erect into a science a series of propositions which God has communicated to us as so many detached, and to us irreconcileable, verities, the common basis, or connecting principle of which He has not seen fit so to communicate. I am profoundly convinced of the consistency of all the declarations of Scripture; but I am as profoundly convinced of my own incapacity to perceive that they are consistent. I can

receive them each in turn, and to some extent I can (however feebly) draw nutriment from each of them. To blend them one with another into an harmonious or congruous whole, surpasses my skill, or perhaps my diligence. But what then? I am here not to speculate, but to repent, to believe, and to obey; and I find no difficulty whatever in believing each in turn of two or more doctrines which yet seem to me incompatible with each other. It is in this sense, and to this extent, that I adopt the whole of the creed called evangelical. I adopt it as a regulator of the affections, as a rule of life, and as a quietus, not as a stimulant, to enquiry. So, I gather, do you; and if so, I, at least, have no right to quarrel with you on that account. Only, if you and I are unscientific Christians, let us be patient and reverent towards those whose deeper minds, or more profound enquiries, or more abundant spiritual experience, may carry them through difficulties which surpass our strength. . . . ."

To Henry Taylor

Penmaenmawr, Conway
5th August, 1854

"Not to be a Governor of a Colony is one of those blessings, the wide diffusion and general enjoyment of which renders us insensible to their value. It is a blessing which poor —— has been deprived of for several years past, and it is very natural that he should be panting for it now. But how I, poor Professor that I am, can be of any use to him is

unimaginable to me, and probably to himself also, though he bids you show me his letter of doleance. I have read it (so far forth as it is legible) with all the sympathy I must always feel in his pains and pleasures, and with all the regard I must always retain for his person. . . . .

". . . . . Penmaenmawr, that is to say (says the handbook) the great land's end, lends its name to a hamlet at its foot, where my wife and daughter and I, with some of her kindred, are staying. We have left civilization behind us, having no divine, lawyer, physician, gentlefolks, or shopkeepers within five miles of us. But we are in the centre of a semi-circle of hills, which set up for mountains, the summits of which I daily reach in about an hour's walk, and find there abundance of peat moss, heather, and fresh air; old acquaintance whom I am glad to meet again. Within doors, I occupy myself with writing historical notes on 'Grotius de Jure Belli,' for the behoof of my pupils at Cambridge. It amuses me, and, so far as I can judge, will do no harm to anyone else; which is more than one can always say of the pastimes of life.

"We have no very distinct notion of the time at which we are likely to be in London, but I hope it will be, at latest, in the beginning of October. I trust that your christening may be able to wait till then. According to the teaching which I usually receive on baptismal matters, I should say that it ought, in all cases, to be reserved to the very last breath a man has to draw; but as the value of all our inferences depends on the completeness and the

distinctness of our knowledge of the premises from which we argue, I would not give a rush for all the logical deductions which all the Doctors of the Church have made from Divine Revelation on these, so utterly incomprehensible, topics; and therefore I give no heed to any inferences of my own respecting them. I shall be heartily glad to promise, on your babe's behalf, that he shall fight manfully against the world, the flesh, and the devil, without troubling myself with any deeper subtleties. It will be a hard battle for him, poor child, but a battle well worth the fighting."

To Mrs Carlyle

29 Westbourne Terrace
25th November, 1854

"My dear Mrs Carlyle,—Lady Ashburton is very kind and gracious in remembering that she ever saw me at all. May her shadow never be less! but if she should really see me at The Grange, she would not willingly let a second sun go down there upon my stupidity and her own weariness of me. The Tub in which I live, except when it is now and then employed as a pulpit, serves me as a cell, from which I cannot go forth to darken the festivities and the social meetings of you young people. It is but a sorry tenement, and I trust that my children will learn from my example to maintain a larger and a freer intercourse with mankind than I have done; but that 'inaptitude to please,' of which Henry Taylor boasts as his 'blessed gift,' I accept as a serious but irreparable

misfortune, Nevertheless, I hope that you and Mr Carlyle will continue to bear with me.

"I am, my dear Mrs Carlyle, very truly yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

To Mrs Austin

29 Westbourne Terrace, London
30th November, 1854

". . . . . When the book* is published, (as inevitably it will be,) I hope to join in the universal talk about it. It is little wonderful that you should have found much pure gold in those diggings. The heart must have been sound at the core, which broke out, in such a veteran observer of the world, in such a constant flow of drollery, and glee, and merriment, even when most intent on doing the world important service. Such a child-like freedom of spirit gave better evidence of a well-spent life than the most solemn aspect ever seen at La Trappe. There is no real, I think no seeming, incongruity between Sydney Smith the frolicsome, and Sydney Smith the benevolent and the devout. In his sacred calling, not to have been devout would have been dishonest. But the world calling itself 'the religious,' have always assumed that he belonged to 'the irreligious world.' Give me proof that this is an error, and you may draw on me for £1000. . . . .

". . . . . I mourn to hear of your relapse into weakness. I trust it is not so with your husband. His

* "Life of Sydney Smith," proposed by Mrs Austin.

mission in this world was to read and to meditate, and to talk for the benefit of his fellow-men, and if he fulfils that office, he will merit a biography quite as much as Sydney Smith.

"Ever affectionately yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

To Mrs Austin

2nd December, 1854

". . . . . I hope that, when you were at Cromer, both you and Mr Austin fell in love with the Miss Gurney, who lives in the cottage buried in woods and haunted with poultry, and moves about her garden in her wheeling chair—if indeed you had not lost your hearts to her years ago. If the Pope had any sense in his infallible head, he would forthwith canonize her. She lives in the centre of a most cordial circle, who seemed to be a kind of epicure in the way of benevolence: loving everybody and everything indeed with abundant catholicism, but selecting for the especial exercise of that kindly feeling various objects whom their imaginations had decked out and embellished to their hearts' content. God bless them all. There is wanting a Christian treatise *de arte amandi*, setting forth how the sacred flame may be kindled and cherished, and purified and brightened by judicious blindness, by warm colouring, by active services, by affectionate long-suffering, and such like honest devices. The Gurneys, and Hoares, and Buxtons, with their brotherhood and sisterhood, should all be contributors to the work, and you the editor. . . . ."

To Mrs Austin

29 Westbourne Terrace

5th December, 1854

". . . . . Of course I have not the very slightest wish to learn that he [Sydney Smith] was a religious man, after the model of any particular class of persons calling themselves religious. But I meant to say, and must still say, that when the world is permitted to study the private life and familiar correspondence of a clergyman of the Church of England, enjoying large benefices, the world, whether religious or irreligious, will desire to be assured that he was a man of piety and devotion. They will say, or at least they will think and feel, that, to be pious and devout, is just as essential to the truth, the honour, and the integrity of such a man, as to be brave and obedient is to the truth, honour, and integrity of a soldier—that a man who waged such a relentless war against all false pretentions, was, above all other men, bound to be the very character which he claimed to be ; that is, a pastor living and labouring for the salvation of the souls of his flock. Now, whether justly or unjustly, I know not, the world—the irreligious and the religious alike—suppose that Sydney Smith was *not* pious, or devout, or a pastor caring for the souls of his people, but a man whose theological opinions hung very loosely about him, and whose belief in Christianity appeared very doubtful to his most intimate associates. If this is true, his title to the praise of honesty can hardly be admitted. If (as I most sincerely hope, and am most ready to believe)

it is untrue, it is an error of which I think the world ought to be disabused. . . . .

". . . . . The war is not without its bright side. The self-sacrifice and heroism of our men is nothing less than sublime, and the wonderful illustration which their sufferings afford of the degree in which the system of human life is pervaded with the principle of vicarious sacrifice, is strange and most impressive. But for the rest, I look on what is passing as a proof that the nations of Europe had become gorged with the superabundance of all the luxuries and indulgences of life, and that, as a Puritan Commentator on these events might express it, 'The Lord hath a great sacrifice to do at Bozrah.' There was need of severe national discipline, and it has come in a frightful form. There was need of national humiliation; and humbling enough to us it is to be the allies in arms of such an Emperor as Louis Napoleon, and of such a vile portion of the human family as the Turks. There was need that we should learn many wholesome but painful lessons, which this dreadful contest is daily teaching us. It interferes with the serenity of the daily life of every one of us; and as the waste of our resources advances, it will bring us into a too familiar intimacy with poverty in all its most repulsive aspects. Nevertheless, I believe that the progress of the affairs of our world is, on the whole, steadily though slowly towards good, and take comfort in the question, 'Is there evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?'—convinced that the evils which He inflicts as a Judge, He makes the instruments of eventual good as an Administrator. . . . ."

To his Wife

University Arms Hotel
26th December, 1854

". . . . . As to Cambridge, I can hardly persuade myself that I have not been here the whole summer and autumn. Everything looks so familiar and so unchanged—even my tall and stout attendants are no taller and stouter than before. Well! 'Patience, and shuffle the cards,' as Don Quixote says in his dulness.

"I trust that you are making many poor people happy. That is your gift and employment—a much better one than mine. Have no mercy on ——'s £10, for the weather is merciless. . . . ."

To his Wife

University Arms Hotel
27th December, 1854

". . . . . This place is as this place always is—not to my taste, but yet a good place compared to most—good, I mean, as regards mental activity, and high objects of pursuit. I am going to make various calls: a queer business, but not to be neglected. . . . ."

Cambridge, 28th December, 1854

". . . . . This morning, I went to the Geldarts' to breakfast. There were present, among less noticeable people, Goulburn, and Justice Cresswell, and Dr Locock. He told us that he had read several letters from Miss Nightingale to her surgical friend, Mr Bowman, in London, in which she said that her first duty had been to have from two to three thousand

men washed clean of vermin—that she was often summoned from her meals with notice that some patient's bandages had given way, and that he was bleeding to death, whereupon she got up, and herself stuffed lint into the wound, and held it tight till the surgeon arrived with his tourniquet; and that she could more easily command a brigade of light infantry than her own brigade of forty nurses. They all wear a uniform. 'I came out here, Ma'am,' said one of them, 'prepared to go through anything, and to endure any hardship, but I did not come prepared to wear such a cap as this—and what's more, I wont wear it.' Locock confirmed the story that she was an admirable surgeon, and he added that her pictures of the hospital at Scutari contained portraits of whatever is most shocking and revolting. . . . . Very much too good and great a woman for this bad and dirty world she must be. . . . ."

29th December, 1854

". . . . . Yesterday we had at dinner Cresswell the judge, Whewell, Sedgwick, Hopkins the tutor, and many more. By dint of converting a dinner into a fast, I kept myself tolerably well through the evening. Whewell talked as much, and as well, and as roughly, as usual. . . . ."

University Arms Hotel
31st December, 1854

"I am glad that this feasting is over, for though I have seldom eaten less than during the last six days, I have been constrained to talk much and to lament

what I have seen and heard. In the midst of this dismal war, what an excess of self-indulgence, is it not! What right have we had to be gourmandizing, and gossiping, and giggling at this rate! It is like an Irish wake, where they get drunk over the bier of their father, brother, or mother. Yesterday, Saturday, we had another party of between thirty and forty people. . . . . Next to me ——, the Master of —— College, who sat silent for two hours and a half, never speaking but once, when he answered a question in a few constrained words. I could have envied him his taciturnity and his freedom from all idle words, had it not been that there is a time for all things, and that dinner time is not the time for such solemn silence. . . . .

". . . . . I have besides been reading some of Pascal's 'Pensées,' because it was the only book within my reach. Otherwise I would not have read it, for it is not exhilarating, nor elevating, nor moving, but oppressive, from the ponderosity of all that he says, and from the darkness of which he is always so painfully conscious: a darkness which overspreads all his prospects of the world through which we are passing, and of the world towards which we are so rapidly advancing.

"How rapidly indeed! Here is the end of 1854. . . .

". . . . . I need not tell you with what awe I think, whenever I do think, of the past and the future, and of all epochs which bring them vividly into view. Yet this is a weakness to be combated, not to be borne with submissively. . . . ."

In November, 1854, my brother Fitzjames had become engaged to be married to Mary Richenda Cunningham, daughter of my father's old friend, the Vicar of Harrow; and the marriage took place in April, 1855, my brother and his wife spending the first year of their married life in my father's house, 29 Westbourne Terrace. This arrangement was made easy by my father's having, in January, 1855, accepted the Professorship of Modern History and Political Economy at Haileybury, just resigned by Professor Jones, who died soon afterwards. The appointments to the Indian Civil Service having at that time been thrown open to competition, the College at Haileybury was already doomed, but was to continue its existence, as an East India College, for three years longer; and the work could be easily combined with that of the Cambridge Professorship, while the house in the country was particularly convenient at the moment. We spent the summers of 1855, 1856 and 1857 at Haileybury, returning to London for four or five months of each intervening winter.

To his Wife

East India College, Hertford
23rd January, 1855

"Well, here I am! . . . . . I dined in the College Hall: a most sumptuous dinner for a College. There were Melvill,* and Leith, and other gentlemen, named I think Williams,† and I hardly know what other

* Henry Melvill, the well-known preacher, then Principal of the East India College.

† Afterwards Sir Monier Williams.

names, except a Col. Ouseley. They did not shine much in talk, but they were friendly and talkative about all kinds of common-place topics. After dinner I came to this (Melvill's) house. He is rather a tame and unimpressive converser, and seems languid, and looks old and feeble—quite unlike himself in the pulpit. Of course I did not utter a sentence all the day. I never do. Mrs M. is to my mind a pleasant, cordial person. . . . . Nothing can be more plain, simple, and almost homely than their ways of living."

. . . . . .

East India College, Hertford

24th January, 1855

". . . . . I have read or spoken two lectures here this morning: short introductory discourses. Melvill was present at both, and expressed his great contentment with each. The difference here and at Cambridge is that here the boys listen with anxiety to get up the subject for their examination. At Cambridge they listen or not, as it happens—that is, as it happens to interest them. It is pleasanter here, except that one moves so very slowly.

"Mr Jones is not expected to outlive the day. . . .

"I think that I am very good friends with Mr and Mrs M. They seem to me very pleasant people, save that he is exceedingly low-spirited, and stands in need of much heating up. It is evident that the fire within has burnt up the fuel, and he has none to spare for common occasions. I never saw such

a contrast as the great preacher and the common talker. I really do begin to fancy that my own talkativeness is rather an unusual propensity, for so old a gentleman as I am, especially. . . . .

"What would you Londoners give for our Hertfordshire atmosphere ! . . . . ."

East India College

14th February, 1855

". . . . . At the station I met Lord Glenelg and Mr Philosopher Adams. We went to Broxbourne in the same carriage: not an unpleasant party, though one of them (guess which ?) talked too much. . . . ."

University Arms Hotel

7th May, 1855

". . . . . And so Inglis is dead ! . . . . .

"As to dear Inglis, he has gone in the ripeness of age and of honour, of enjoyment, of popularity, of usefulness, and (as I doubt not) of piety. Of him I have none but pleasant remembrances, save only that I regret not having more cultivated his society of late. . . . ."

East India College

20th May, 1855

". . . . . Nothing happened at Cambridge, save that after my last lecture a humble-looking young man outstayed all the rest to thank me, for which I felt most cordially grateful to him. . . . ."

To J. F. S.

East India College, Hertford
17th May, 1855

".....I revere——'s disinterestedness in recommending his own successful rival. But I cannot commend his judgment, nor think that he acted wisely, even though he acted uprightly. If the Government had described him to himself as Mr X., and had described —— to him as Mr Y., and had asked him to advise them whether they should select X. or Y., he would doubtless have recommended the choice of X., for doubtless X. would have been the better choice. The sound of his own name, and the phantom of an imaginary selfishness, and the tendency to self-depreciation, got the better of his understanding. Moral: He is out of his place at the bar. Too good for it, perhaps, but certainly unfit.

"I was not particularly well qualified for that calling myself, nor perhaps for that which I now follow, of a double distilled and highly rectified Don. The Lecture Room is not so much amiss as the Combination Room, where day by day we take 'the walk to Trumpington,' pacing the old road, and doubling the old sign-post, and covering ourselves and each other with the old dust, for the benefit of the digestive organs of the whole party. And considering the tax we lay upon those organs in the Hall, they may perhaps have a right to the succour of our college port, sherry, and thread-bare table-talk. I swallow and acquiesce, thinking it nothing less than a prodigy still, that in these years of mine, I have just

got into a third profession, and am enabled to pursue it, sturdily at least, whether otherwise successfully or not. My lectures will make a noble bonfire. . . . ."

To his Wife

East India College

20th May, 1855

". . . . . At length I went to our cold, dreary chapel. We had a sermon from Melvill. It is very strange, but though his was one of his thunder and lightning efforts, it did not stun or dazzle me as of old times. With one or two exceptions, it seemed to me a very good discourse: nothing less and nothing more. . . . .

" I have just received two of those notes by which people think to give one pleasure, one of them lauding my 'genius and learning.' the other expressing a stranger's wish to be in my sublime company. Oh dear, oh dear! Calumny has a bitter sting, but not half so keen as ill got up flattery. . . . ."

To J. F. S.

East India College, Hertford

27th June, 1855

" You made a parricidal attack on my eyes last night, when, on your mother's arrival here, I sat down, late as it was, to read your contribution to the new Legal Society. The fatigue which my slender powers of vision underwent was, however, well repaid. The paper must, I believe and hope, make you known to the magnates of your profession as a man of a clear head, a vigorous grasp, and a flowing elocution.

The defence of our laws, as often and so far as they can justly be defended, is the best of all such paths to follow; for now-a-days, any man who can be abusive fancies himself a Bentham, just as anyone who can twist his words into distorted shapes is a make-believe Carlyle. Besides, I really assent to what you say as to the solid good sense and consistency of our own method of stating the problem, 'guilty or not guilty,' as often as the problem, 'sane or insane,' is stated about the accused person. All that you say, moreover, or rather hint at, touching the perfect intelligibility of questions relating to things in themselves unintelligible, is, I think, a great truth, and capable of a much wider application.

"In short, I am thoroughly well satisfied with your performance.

"The *evil* genius of criticism suggests that the method might have been rendered more evident, and that the style would have been the better for a little more compactness. Yet it is a good method and a good style as it stands—far better than I could have done at your age, and far more free and flowing than I have been able to write at any age."

To the Right Hon. T. B. Macaulay

Westbourne Terrace
16th December, 1855

"Dear Macaulay,—Here is a contribution to the bonfire you are making of letters of thanks and congratulations. My only regrets are that some of those who are gone have not lived to exult in your triumph,

and that some of those who are going may not hope to live till the next renewal of it. A happy meeting to you and to them hereafter, amongst those good and faithful servants to whom it will then be said, 'Well done' by the only Judge whose applause is of any real value to you.

"Ever yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

To Rev. H. Melvill

December, 1855

". . . . . I hope you are reading Macaulay at odds and ends of times. I have not advanced very far, but far enough to recognise our friend in almost every sentence—haunted by no doubts, exempt from every tinge of ill-nature, keeping out of all obscure depths, running after every amusing incident or image, and making most captivating music as he crows and flaps his wings in the consciousness of strength and courage; and the more to be delighted in because he challenges and justifies so much criticism as to flatter the self-love of his critics.

"Ever yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

To his Wife

Haileybury,

5th February, 1856

"There is not a pen here that will do justice to my dictation. 'Sad work,' as Mr Wilberforce was always saying. . . . .

". . . . . At the station I met that strange man, —— who told me, (what do you think as news, at a railway, just before I left him ?) that St. Paul called St Peter Cephas, not Peter, because he (Paul) was out of humour with him, and used his Jewish name, just as though one should call a Scotchman 'Sawney!' With this addition to my stock of theological knowledge, I left Cambridge! . . . . ."

To J. F. S.

East India College, Hertford
Sunday, 27th April, 1856

"I seldom try the experiment of writing to you or to anyone else in my own handwriting, nor indeed is it often that I write letters at all, either in person or by deputy. For which neglect of a very common and amiable practice I have many reasons, good or bad: one reason, perhaps, being that *my* father passed half his life in writing letters, and the reversal of parental habits being, *selon moi*, one of the ordinances of our lives: I mean when such habits have been carried to excess, and have proved inconvenient. But here is a great rain, attended by a great momentary dearth of books, and coincident with these provocatives to write, is a subject which occupies my thoughts not seldom just now—the subject, I mean, of the multitude of your literary pursuits. I may of course be quite mistaken, but I much doubt the wisdom of your undertaking so much in that way. The 'Saturday Review,' 'Frazer,' the 'National Review,' the 'Edinburgh Review,' and, if I mistake not, some more

than these, seem to be tasking you, week by week, if not day by day, continually, while the projected 'Law Book' is an habitual *pièce de résistance*. Now be it agreed that you do well to address yourself occasionally to these ephemeral works, to earn some reputation by them, and to make them the means of enlarging and strengthening your social circle. Agreed also that the money which they yield is worth your having, and that you are, at the worst, engaged in a strenuous and invigorating pursuit,—yet it remains to ask: Do you not urge it too far?

As to the money, I well know with what a voice of thunder the cry from a nursery rouses up a father to work for the supply of its needs. But the first duty he owes to his household is so to husband his strength of mind and body that it may hold out during the many years through which the tax on it is likely to last or rather to be increasing. Intemperance in all its forms, even when these forms are the most captivating, and have most of the semblance of wisdom, must be eschewed by him who has pledged himself to educate and maintain a family by his own labour, and there is no variety of intemperance more evidently doomed to work out its own ill-reward, than that which is practised by a bookseller's drudge of the higher order. I say of the higher order, because the literary tasks which exercise only the attention (such as dictionary and other compilations), without taxing the inventive or imaginative powers, are rather soothing than exhausting, are narcotics rather than stimulants, tea-drinking instead of dram-drinking.

But whoever writes for the amusement or captivation of idle people of critical taste, must write in more or less of mental tension and excitement, unfriendly to the health of the nerves. To this all literary biographies bear witness; and the proof of it is to be seen in every professional man of letters one ever sees. Witness Carlyle, Hayward, Croker, Forster, and the whole body of newspaper editors. It was in this way that Southey became an old man prematurely, and that the two last editors of the 'Quarterly Review,' Gifford and Lockhart, partook his fate. A man should have the constitution of an eagle to be habitually engaged in these flights, and habitually breathing the attenuated air of the hill-tops, on which a regular *littérateur* must accustom himself to dwell.

"It is a profession in which a man cannot control his engagements, or throw them off at will. He is in alliance with fevered booksellers and hard-run editors, who have no pity for him, or for anyone who obstructs the regular appearance, or the alluring appearance, of 'the next number.' They soon discover when they have to do with a free man, and when with a man dependent for his living on their countenance and support. Since the abolition of West India Slavery, the world has known no more severe servitude than this.

"I know nothing of the opinions and feelings of the patrons of the bar nowadays. But in all days it must to some extent be true, as when I knew it, that the whole body of lawyers, whether barristers or attorneys, were predisposed to look with disfavour on

a man of letters who also aspired to be a man of briefs. The natural and not wholly unreasonable belief that he who so employed his time could not be wholly devoted to the arduous studies of the bar, was aided by another feeling, as natural, though less reasonable—the grudging any man more kinds of praise than one. The customers of Mr Place or of Mr Leslie (the two eminent philosophical tailors) could not be persuaded that men who philosophised so well could stitch decently. To run down Macaulay as a legislator is essential to the comfort of his literary rivals. This may be a prejudice, but it is a prejudice for which some foundation in truth is not wanting.

"I cannot also but doubt whether a man of your age (for, *pace tuâ*, you are yet but a very young man) can be quite ready and ripe for a quarterly, monthly, and weekly efflux of doctrine, of opinion, of argument, of illustration, and of '*topica*' of all kinds. When, years ago, you took to be [a regular contributor to] the 'Morning Chronicle,' almost before you had ceased to be an undergraduate, you found out that a man must have a large accumulated capital of knowledge to back a rapid periodical expenditure of it, and that to maintain a position of authority and influence in literature, it is requisite to make it a toilsome and serious business, and not a mere amusement—to devote to it the body of one's time, and not the mere interstices of time. I would not have you emit immature notions, and thoughts to be hereafter retracted and repented of. Still less would I have you play any tricks, and put on the semblance of a knowledge which you do not really possess.

"What I read of your writing seems to me singularly unequal. At times it is excellent in style and in conception, and evidently flowing from springs pure and copious and active, and giving promise of great future eminence. At other times the marks of haste, of exhaustion, and of being run out of breath, are perceptible to one who judges with an eye so sensitive as mine is on this subject. I see no reason why you should not become a great writer, and one of the foremost teachers of your country-folk, if you would resolve never to write except from a full mind—which is just as essential to literary success as it is to success in singing never to sing but out of well-inflated lungs; or as it is to success in commerce never to trade except on well-filled coffers. . . . ."

To J. F. S.

E. I. College, Hertford
Saturday

"I am about to be, in appearance at least, inconsistent in what I am dictating, when it is compared with what I last wrote to you. Then, I dissuaded your embracing so many subjects, and serving so many literary masters. Now, it occurs to me to suggest to you an undertaking which, I think, might redound to your credit and advantage.

"Forty years ago, men got on at the bar by defending the law as it was, the courts as they were, and the administration of justice as it then was administered. The way to distinction now is that of making war on the whole legal and judicial system.

There is Lord St. Leonards, whom I well remember an advocate of things as they were, and who rose to distinction in that line, now making long speeches to assert his own title to the glory of having been the author of the measure by which all Masterships in Chancery were abolished.

" You would therefore be acting in the spirit of the age to which you belong by attaching your name to a proposal for a great legal reform, of which nothing, so far as I know, has hitherto been said, but in favour of which there is much to be said of very great weight.

" Suppose that you published a pamphlet, in the shape of a letter to—it matters not whom, say Lord Lyndhurst—on the expediency of transferring to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council that important branch of the administration of justice which at present takes place in the office of the Secretary of State for the Home Department. A. B. is condemned to death, or transportation, or penal servitude. The point of law is decided against him. Then arises the question of equity. Should A. B. be hanged, or transported, or tread-milled? The administration of penal equity is conducted by the Secretary of State for the time being in appearance—by the Sovereign in name—by the Under-Secretary in reality. Why should this be? The answer is: No one can possibly lay down rules for the admission or refusal of claims to mercy. It is precisely for that reason that such claims should neither be admitted nor rejected by a single man in a solitary chamber. A. B. suffers or

escapes, not according to any fixed rule, but according to that man's notions, tempers, diligence, haste, digestion, and so on. If there be any subject on which it is especially requisite that the judgment should be '*motivé*' and explained in the presence of the 'Times,' it is the subject of applying broad moral or prudential principles to the cases of convicts seeking for pardon. Mercy and justice are contradistinguished from each other only in name, not in reality. A merciless sentence is not just, an unjust sentence is not really merciful.

"All this is elementary, and obvious enough; but we have so long been accustomed to hear and to talk nonsense about 'mercy, the brightest jewel of the crown,' and about the sanctity of that royal prerogative, that this old practice remains erect amidst the otherwise universal wreck of all the practices which were held sacred in or about Westminster Hall at the beginning of this century. I believe that it had best go with the rest, and that a well-written assault upon it would bring the assailant advantageously into notice. If a pamphlet would not be convenient, could you not bring before your Law Amendment Society such a project as I have mentioned? It would be a good introduction to the book of which we have so often spoken. . . . ."

To J. F. S.

E. I. College,
August, 1856

". . . . . —— says that I am very prolific of schemes, which may be true enough, without redounding much

to my glory, for the making of schemes and the execution of them are provinces of which the command is usually separate. . . . ."

To J. F. S.

E. I. College
August, 1856

". . . . . More or less of research is of course indispensable to the production of such an historical retrospect, however concise it may be. But research into books is a totally different thing from the reading of books from end to end. A single morning will often suffice to ascertain whether there is really a needle in the haystack, even though the hiding-place be a quarto or a folio. But in order to success in that kind of investigation, it is above all things requisite to be perfectly calm, unhurried, and unfretted: in order to which it is requisite to pause and change the work, or the air, or both, as soon as the nerves begin to exhibit any impatience. . . . ."

(Message dictated to his Wife)

To J. F. S.

E. I. College
31st October, 1856

". . . . . However, your father adds that he is himself well aware, and is perfectly conscious that you also are well aware, that among his other faults or defects, that of a morbidly vivid perception of possible evils and remote dangers is one; and he is glad to believe

that if you err on the subject, your errors are on the opposite side, which he is quite clear is at once the wiser and the safer side. . . . ."

To Henry Taylor

Westbourne Terrace

4th November, 1856

"May the best blessings of God rest on your new-born child, on the children who were born to you before, and on their parents. You have a nature so much more valiant and robust than my own, that I may perhaps do you wrong in surmising that you partake at all of my anxious temperament; but if you know what it is to be haunted by foreboding thoughts, and if they are ever awakened in your mind by the prospects which a young and numerous family may suggest, let that devil be cast out by the reflections which your genial spirit will call into life; and which a Spirit infinitely higher and more gracious than that of man will cherish, and strengthen, and mature within you. This heritage and gift which cometh of the Lord, is bestowed on us as a cause of thankfulness, and as an exercise of our affiance in the Divine Giver; and the suicidal self-tormentings by which so many of us embitter the cup so bountifully prepared and mixed for us may, without any irreverent fancy, be believed to be offensive to our Heavenly Father, and dishonouring to that earthly relation which brings us into some faint resemblance to Himself.

"I am preaching a very old sermon, addressed times without number by myself, the preacher, to

myself, the hearer ; and hoping that, if you chance to stand in need of it, the homily may be more profitable to you than it ever has been to me. Yet, not to accuse myself wrongfully, I can truly say, that during the thirty-four years and upwards in which I have seen my own children about me, gratitude for possessing them, delight in their society, hope of their success in wise and worthy pursuits, and joy in the fulfilment of that hope, have largely and habitually predominated over all morbid and dastardly anticipations. Now there is added to them one of the second generation, of whom with, I suppose, a grandfather's fondness, I can say, that if it be literally, as it is poetically, true that 'deepest thoughts may lie within a sleeping infant's eye,' such thoughts are treasured up in hers ; for she looks about her with an expression like that of an inquisitive, but not surprised, visitor of a new world, with which she has other worlds to compare. I never before understood the saying, that of all beautiful things the eye of a young child is the most beautiful. You must wait, how many years ? before you can know what kind of thing grandpaternity is, and what kind of person it will make of yourself. May you be as profound in that lore as Lord Monteagle is by this time.

"Ever affectionately yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

To Mrs Austin

[*About*] *November, 1856*

". . . . . I fear there is an end, for the present, of Sydney Smith's biography. But when your heart

acquires the new habits which the derangement of it demands, and as I hope commences, then you will take to your pen again, and give the world the benefit of the lessons which this heavy trial is teaching you.

"For myself, I do not wilfully lose any time in completing the two volumes which I have yet to finish of my Lectures on French History, though latterly I have not advanced at any great pace. To hear my own voice as a public speaker the other day at Manchester was so strange a novelty to me as to raise some doubts about my identity. But I am glad I went there, for it is a pathetic, an impressive, and an awful sight to see. The place is a little world, with doings, dogmas, and doctors of its own—with the most curious self-reliance and self-importance. There are the materials of a mighty volcanic eruption there, and in my conscience I believe that no better service can be done to this land of ours than that of sowing and cultivating the seeds of truth and wisdom in that compact and confederated mass of handicraftsmen. In throwing out some such suggestions in a vast crowded room like that, I found it utterly impossible to develope my meaning or to do more than hint at it. But that you approve what I said makes me glad; for it is with sincere esteem and affection that, in the name of my amanuensis and my own, I subscribe myself

"Ever yours

"JAS. STEPHEN."

To J. F. S.

29 Westbourne Terrace
20th February, 1857

"Much to the advantage (I believe) of my associates, nature has kindly indisposed me to debate, so that even if I were convinced of the soundness of my views and of the unsoundness of yours, I should b disposed to say that the *pros* and the *cons* being already drawn up in battle array on paper, all that remains is for you to let them knock their heads against each other, and then to award the victory to the host which might seem to you to have the best of it. But I am *not* quite convinced of the soundness of my own views, or of the unsoundness of yours. I am very liable to err on the side of over-caution, and I am quite ready to believe that I have seen a lion in the way, when there was really nothing better or more formidable than a jackass.

"By all manner of means do as seems to you best and wisest. It is one of the greatest pleasures of my life to believe that you are a more hopeful, a more laborious, and an abler man than I ever was or could have been; and though grey or rather white hairs will lay claim to more wisdom (the hardly-earned fruit of much painful experience) than they will concede to men of black, brown, or red scalps, yet that very wisdom admonishes the white-headed that among the prodigal varieties of nature and of providence is the variety of human character, of human conditions, and of human fortunes, which forbids any one man to transfer the experiences of his own life bodily to any

other man, as a rule or pattern for his guidance. Find your own path, with the blessing and guidance of God, and I shall be most abundantly satisfied, however widely it may diverge from the path which I have been following all these years. . . . ."

To his Wife

East India College
4th March, 1857

". . . . . This morning I came in the train (eight o'clock) with Leith. He was moved to the centre of his being by the news that the Government were in a minority last night, and mean to dissolve Parliament. If you enquire, why should this produce a Leith-quake ? the answer is that he is to make an effort to get into Parliament, and thinks he will succeed. I am a little ashamed of my own selfish apathy about all this. There are many forms of government, such as self-government, wife government, fashion government, and the like, about which I am anxious enough ; but as to who shall govern me in Parliament, or in the Cabinet, I am as unanxious as man can be. We are a most ungovernable people, except when we are cheated into the belief that we are having our own way, and by whom that cheat is practised I care not. . . . ."

29 Westbourne Terrace
6th March, 1857

". . . . . What a way of life that of a shopkeeper must be who exhibits his goods to a succession of scornful customers. Here we have but one thing to dispose

of—this house of ours, and everybody who calls (some came on Wednesday) exclaims how little it is, how narrow, and how unfit for their high-mightinesses! I begin to feel about it as Dr Primrose felt about the horse which he sold to Mr Jenkinson, or which Moses sold. . . . ."

7th March, 1857

". . . . . On Sunday I went to Spurgeon's. Immensely inferior he was to the Spurgeon of the former Sunday —out of spirits I think. The sermon was pumped up, instead of flowing from copious fountains—the humour less effective, and the delivery less easy and natural. I hope I am not uncharitable: indeed, I am sure I am not, for I judge not the real and invisible man, but only the apparent, the visible and the audible man, when I say that the appearance is not that of a man profoundly anxious to lead his audience heavenwards, but rather that of a man full of self-consciousness, aware that much is expected of him, and striving to satisfy that expectation. He ought to have given ten years to study and devotion, and he would have been a very great man. . . . ."

East India College, Hertford
Wednesday, 23rd or 24th June, 1857

"I have not seen a soul (perhaps souls are never seen) this day, except when the servants waited on me in the morning; and I know nothing about the things or persons passing here—save that both things and persons are very hot indeed. This kind of day is quite thrown away upon me, for it just confines me

to the house, and the house, being uninhabited, confines me to myself. I have passed the whole morning in reading Tasso, Machiavelli, and Botta by turns, greatly admiring my own knowledge of Italian; but my eyes testified against me so often that I was forced to shut them again and again, and to let my thoughts have a ramble. I suppose it is not peculiar to me, though it is true of me, that when I throw up the reins, and let my ideas yoke on to each other as they like best—that is to say, when I am half asleep or more—I have incomparably more and better to say for myself than when I am wide awake. They fall into groups like the bits of broken glass in a kaleidoscope, far prettier than would be found if I set about it with the utmost of my powers. The moral is, that I had best give up thinking, which, as the Rejected Addresses say, is but an idle waste of thought. . . . . I take this to be no bad specimen of the possibility of filling a sheet of paper without putting a thing into it, with a thermometer standing, I guess, at a thousand. . . . ."

East India College

24th June, 1857

". . . . . There is a kind of sullenness mixed with self-assertion about him [a boy he employed as reader and amanuensis] which makes me anxious to be rid of him. It is a bad thing for one's mind to live much with anyone whom one cannot like. . . . .

"I have just received from —— a copy of his little book . . . . . with my name and the words . . . . . very unpleasant words, however kindly meant. To

say flattering things flatteringly is the rarest of all gifts: better not say them at all, even when most sincerely intended.

"It is awfully hot. Poor 'It,' how capricious, how much reviled, and how much talked about, it is. . . . ."

To J. F. S.

East India College, Hertford
19th July, 1857

". . . . . Leslie left us this morning to stand godfather to your son. I neither believe nor disbelieve in the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, because I have not a steady guess what the propounders of it really mean. But I potently believe it is a duty and a blessing—a duty incumbent on parents to place their infants, a blessing to the infants to be placed, in the Christian Church, by that significant rite, which Christ Himself enjoined on all by whom, and to whom, His revelation should be preached. Even if I thought that He had given no such command, and that the rite was productive of no benefit to the subject of it, I should still hold myself bound to comply with a usage so venerable and universal. But it is, I think, quite enough for us to know that He, by whose name we are called, gave us this precept. Our business is to obey His commandments, which we shall never do if we are determined to begin by knowing the grounds and the motives on which He pronounced them. Your mother and I are contriving to be mentally present at this baptism, and to join in the prayers which are being offered by those who are actually present at it. . . . ."

To his Wife

24th July, 1857

"A man who wishes to be known to the world ought to write an account of the events of one of his most uneventful days. It would exhibit him detached from all accidental circumstances, such as he is in and by himself. If I should write an account of the last twenty-four hours, it would exhibit just such an unadorned portrait of me. But you know that I do not wish to have any portraits taken of me, mentally or bodily, and so I shall say nothing about the nothings with which I have been occupying myself."

. . . . . .

To Miss Venn

East India College
24th July, 1857

". . . . . I have no remembrance of a time when sight-seeing was otherwise than a penance to me; and if the Recorder should have to pass sentence on me for a misdemeanour, he could do nothing better than to order me a daily visit to the Crystal Palace for as many months as such a discipline would be compatible with my existence.

"With my books, and with such trees and fields as are about me here, I do quite well enough without obtruding myself on the merriment of you young people. Yet those books now and then lift up their voices and tell me some home truths on this subject which are not exhilarating. For example, I have this

morning come to the end of the 'Letters of Hugo Grotius' (one of the saints of my calendar), and have laid them down with the conviction that a man who knew a thousand-fold more of books than I do, could at the same time be a hundred-fold more mixed up with the ways and the inhabitants of the world than ever I have been. Be very happy, then, dear E——, and rejoice in all that falls in your way, for you have long been living only to make others happy, and to diffuse around you peace and consolation, where joy was out of the question. If I did not sincerely love you, I fear I should be envious of you. . . . ."

To Archdeacon Allen

East India College, Hertford
18th August, 1857

". . . . . This is a sad society in which we are living at Haileybury just now. We have no neighbours or associates here whose worldly fortunes and domestic affections are not deeply wounded or imperilled by the mutiny in India. Our chief, Mr Melvill, has four sons, a daughter, a daughter-in-law, and I know not how many grandchildren and other kindred there; and another of our body has as many sons in the Indian Service, civil and military. I have myself three relations, all exposed to the same risks. One of them is the son of Archdeacon Hodson, who is now among the besiegers of Delhi. The problems, moral and political, to which this state of affairs in our Indian Empire gives rise, would be more than enough to baffle either Aristotle or Buckle, if they were amongst us to speculate on the subject. . . . ."

To T. B. Macaulay

East India College
31st August, 1857

"My dear Macaulay,—Though you have very many friends who have lived much longer in far greater intimacy with you than myself, and whose congratulations on your peerage will be, and ought to be, far more welcome than mine, there are few indeed, if any, still living, beyond the limits of your own family, whose remembrance of you goes back to so remote a time, or who can so well imagine the delight with which your father and your mother would have received such intelligence. I could almost venture to take upon me the character of their representative in expressing what I so well know they would have felt; but you never need the aid of any other man's memory or imagination. May it please God to give you health and strength enough to carry on your History some stages further; and may you have resolution enough to waste none of your time and strength in the House of Lords!

"It is, perhaps, superfluous to request that you will not trouble yourself to acknowledge this. Your hours are the property of us all, and I would not willingly be responsible for wasting any even of your minutes.

"Ever yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

CHAPTER VIII

1857—1859

ROME—WESTBOURNE TERRACE

Letters to J. F. & M. R. Stephen, Mrs Dicey, Mrs Russell Gurney, J. W. Heaviside, The Miss Hodsons, H. Venn, H. Taylor, R. Wall.

IN 1857, my father's work at Haileybury being over, he once more turned towards the thought of spending a winter in Italy; and this time it was actually accomplished. We left England in November, and travelled by railway to Marseilles; by *voiturier* to Genoa, and thence by sea to Civita Vecchia. We spent two months in Rome; and then returned by Assisi and Perugia to Florence, spending ten days on the road. My father was profoundly interested by what he saw on this journey, though there were some drawbacks to his enjoyment of it: the Indian Mutiny was casting a dark shadow over us all, and there were some family anxieties at home, especially as to the health of my uncle, Mr Dicey, the husband of my father's youngest and very dear sister.* The accounts of his state which reached us at Florence were so

* One of their sons is the well-known writer, Albert Venn Dicey, Vinerian Professor of Law at Oxford.

alarming, that my father at once set out for England, arriving a day or two after my uncle's death. He stayed only a few days in London, returning to join my mother and me at Genoa; from whence we travelled by Turin and the Mont Cenis to Pau, where we spent some weeks.

The following letters were written during his absence from England:—

To J. F. S.

Genoa,
6th December, 1857

". . . . . Since I wrote to you from Nice, on the same 30th November, we have seen more beautiful country than we are able to remember, or than it would be possible or reasonable for us to describe. The valley in which Nice lies is the most marvellous of all possible combinations of the joyous and the sublime. As to the Corniche, or coast road from Nice to Genoa, all one has to do is to say at the end of every mile, 'how beautiful,' as Voltaire said a good critic would repeat the word '*beau*' at the end of every line of 'Racine.' Such, at least, is the orthodox opinion on the subject, and though I do not altogether agree with it, yet I will not inflict either on you, or on myself, the penance of reading or writing a discussion on the subject. We came along that road with a *voiturier*. In the way we saw, over and above the picturesque, the little sovereignty of Monaco—the least and the most beautiful of the sovereignties of Europe. Then we saw a long series of towns, looking for all the

world like fragments of Venice, leaping straight out of the water without any suburb to break the line. Next came a most gigantic ruin of a tower erected to the glory of Augustus, and then the island of Corsica made its appearance, looking about twenty miles off, though really nearer a hundred. However, the outline of the mountains was perfectly and distinctly visible. Our next sight was the room in which Columbus is reported to have been born,—or rather the next in order of time was a precipice road, cut by Buonaparte through the rocks, which beats the Simplon and all other such passes hollow.

"The road through Monaco to near Genoa passes through forests of olive and multitudes of palm trees, American aloes, oranges, maize, and cork trees—all strange enough in their way, but all collectively producing a verdure and a foliage most decidedly inferior to our own in England during our five verdant months.

"Of the government of the Sardinian dominions between Nice and Genoa, I am not disposed to judge very favourably, or rather I cannot but conclude that they have to contend with some invincible difficulties. The people have every possible indication of miserable want. The great body of them are without stockings or shoes. A throng of beggars take advantage of every hill to run alongside your carriage, exhibiting their wounds and deformities, and although nothing can be more picturesque than the villages when seen from a distance, nothing can be more wretched than the interior of them. The women are

employed in muscular labours which would throw Mr Kingsley or Mr Reade into fits; and one might say, with very little inaccuracy, that through the hundred and thirty or forty miles which we passed, none of the great resources of life is produced. I saw scarcely any corn or potatoes, and exceedingly little ground on which they could have been grown, and not a single animal grazing, not even sheep or goats on the mountains. How the people live I do not understand, but they must certainly live very badly. Whatever comfort people can find from bad diet and clothing in possessing a picturesque residence, they have in abundance.

"As to their climate, it is at this time of year very delightful, except when a turn of the road exposes you to a blast from the Alps, when you learn to sympathise with the exiles in Siberia.

" We have been in Genoa about twenty-four hours, during which I, as my manner is, have walked extensively through this city of palaces, which I find to be also a city of dark alleys. The palaces are very near akin to the Reform Club, only that they look much more at home than it does. The harbour seems altogether artificial, a bay of the sea having two moles thrown out from the opposite sides towards each other, but with so vast a space between them that a heavy gale of wind from the south must be very formidable to all the vessels in the harbour. It does not much matter, for the largest of them is not much more than a big fishing smack, and of these there are not very many. The whole commercial fleet now in

this harbour could be withdrawn from Liverpool or London without being missed. One grows inordinately English by leaving England—at least I do. . . . .

"As to your paper on 'Tom Brown,' I scarcely know whether to be pleased with or to regret Reeve's approbation of it. The effect will be to induce him to throw out as many additional baits for you as possible, which you will of course swallow. As we travelled along the Corniche yesterday, I saw a lively image of Reeve and his ministering spirits. At twenty or forty different places on the shore, were long lines of half-starved, naked-footed people, hauling a net on shore, under the guidance of a leader who, I believe, took the best of the haul for himself, leaving them the little fishes. His name was, I conjecture, an Italian form of Reeve. . . . ."

To J. F. S. & M. R. S.

Hotel de Londres, Piazza di Spagna
Rome, 12th December, 1857

"We arrived at this city of the Cæsars and the Popes on the evening of yesterday, that is, the 11th December, and we are at this moment lodged at the Hotel de Londres, into the windows of which the sun shines all day. This day it has been shining brilliantly, and we have been sitting without a fire and with open windows until now that the evening has come. Yet here, as all along the coast of the Mediterranean from Marseilles, the wind has been so keen as to seem to penetrate to the very marrow. With a stout great

coat I rather enjoy it, save that the blast attacks you so suddenly with every turning in the road or street that without great caution it must produce an unpleasant if not formidable chill. At Genoa it whistled through the deserted old palaces, where we found some striking pictures in a few state rooms, all the rest being abandoned to every kind of vulgar use. It whistled also over the heights which surround the city, which lies on the lower slopes of a noble amphitheatre of mountains. There also we saw a few superb churches, and then, on Wednesday evening, steamed out of the harbour for Leghorn, which we reached by daybreak. It is a most spacious, thriving, airy, clean city, where we saw a palace which the Duchess of Sutherland might envy—a gigantic cistern with waters so pellucid as to make one thirsty,—and a Jews' Synagogue, the finest, I suppose, which has existed since the destruction of the Temple, about the rebuilding of which a deputation were talking vociferously while we were there. Then re-embarking at Leghorn, we came by daybreak on Thursday to Civita Vecchia. All the way from Genoa the sea was as calm as the Thames at Greenwich, much to our contentment. From Civita Vecchia we came to Rome, a distance of forty-eight miles, of which nearly thirty are within the Campagna. Throughout the whole of that tract of country there is not a single village, and but one very petty town. If there had been no English on the road, it would have been utterly deserted. We had, indeed, during the latter half of the way, an escort of eight or nine *gens d'armes*,

who kept company with us. Their appearance showed that there was some danger to be averted, and that we had nothing to apprehend from it. . . . .

". . . . . To turn for a moment to Rome. We are paying the tribute which the inquisitive have to pay everywhere, and are daily hunting up one thing and another which we should never think of looking at if we were Romans. I have already seen more of this city than I ever saw of London, and even of Cambridge; for there are, I suppose, four times as many rarities there as I have ever taken the trouble to search out. I do not, however, lament this necessity for sight-seeing. On the contrary, I am very glad of it, for there is really nothing else to be done, Rome being, of all the large towns I ever saw, incomparably the most destitute of books. I had nearly given up as hopeless the search for a shop in which one could buy any one of the great authors of ancient Rome, and though I have at length made the discovery of such a shop, it would be utterly put to shame by any one of our respectable old bookstalls. I begin to doubt whether any Roman of this generation ever read a page of Cicero or of Cæsar.

"If any man ever reads what any other man writes about Rome, no good comes of it, unless the two happen to be, in mesmeric language, *en rapport*. In all such writing there is pre-supposed a certain state of mind on the part of him who reads which he who reads very commonly has not. To avoid all such risks, I confine myself to the simple matter of fact statement that there are three distinct Romes—that is, there is

the Rome in ruins; and there is the Rome of the Popes, in a blaze of architecture, sculpture, painting, and gilding; and there is Rome the unsavoury, the place in which the Romans of the nineteenth century live who are neither Popes, cardinals, nor secular grandees. This third Rome makes an appeal to your nose as effective as Cæsarian or Papal Rome make to your imagination or your admiration. A bow on full stretch is a rude resemblance to that part of this city which lies between the Tiber as the arc and the Corso as the chord. It is a vast assemblage of alleys, courts, and winding lanes, intersecting each other, and themselves intersected by masses of old ruins, and by churches, hospitals, and every other imaginable variety of public buildings. Each of these openings is in the nature of a deep well, damp and cold at the bottom, which is seldom visited by any sunshine. All the washerwomen of the place hang their linen out to dry on lines running between the windows, so that as you look down one of these streets, there is no habiliment, male or female, which ever passes through the wash-tub, of which you have not an endless variety of specimens. But the peculiarity of this part of the Eternal City is that it gives birth eternally to a stench altogether imperial, catholic, and œcumenical. It has made me marvel why, as all languages have phrases indicating the effect produced on the eye and the ear by the various gradations of colour and of sound, there is no language, so far as I know, in which expression could be given to the scale of good and evil smells which assail the nostrils. The Roman

stench may be said to be a kind of diapason of all visitations of the nostrils. If I should say anything about Rome in ruins, I must try my hand at a kind of poetry with which you will very gladly dispense. About the Rome of the Popes, I am more and more disposed to agree with Dr Cumming. The whole thing is such an offence to my understanding and sense of propriety, that I can scarcely do justice to the splendour and magnificence of it. I have nothing to say of our three selves except that I have had to battle with a cold, the result of the keenness of the wind which constantly blows from the snowy Apennines on our northern horizon. I am getting up an acquaintance with the 'Times' newspaper in the person of Mr Mozley, and I am trying to make out from the learned in such things whether the earthquakes, which have lately produced extreme terror and very much destruction of life in the two Sicilies, are likely to be chronic during this winter, for if so, I do not feel any call to tread in the steps of Pliny. We have much curiosity to know, in as much detail as M—— pleases, all that is to be known about your household, and your house—the babes and the furniture, and any other topic, however undignified, which would enable us to step across from the Pincian Hill, at the foot of which we are living, to your part of the great city of Tyburnia. It may be some comfort to you both to know that there is not such a house as yours the whole way from the Vatican to the Lateran—I mean not one house so clean and so commodious. . . . ."

To Mrs Dicey

Rome, 21st December, 1857

". . . . . I have not had the good fortune to see the Pope, but from bare-footed Friars up to Cardinals, I see every day the clerical population in all its forms, and in none of them peculiarly picturesque or striking. I cannot resist the impression that this is an unblessed place, a many-faced and many-tongued lie, deceiving and being deceived in a manner most offensive to honesty, good sense, and whatever else is good. . . . ."

To Mrs Dicey

Rome, 27th December, 1857

". . . . . We proceeded about half-past eight in the morning to St Peter's, where the Pope arrived at ten and remained till twelve. Those hours were consumed in ceremonies which you have seen, I suppose, repeatedly. I was glad to see them once, but I would not go a second time for anything less than the privilege of wearing a triple crown myself, and being carried on the red chair under the yellow silk canopy with bunches of feathers on either side of me. If they will not make me Pope, nothing shall make me a second time a spectator of this Papolatry. It is a bad pantomime, badly acted, in a most noble theatre, and with dresses and scenery worthy of all commendation; but the whole procedure is so irreverent and irreligious, that the mere exhibition ceases to be imposing. The Pope himself, while celebrating the High Mass, had indeed the appearance of a man engaged in an act

of devotion, but he was the only person present who had any such appearance, or rather he was the only such person whom I observed. Everyone else was staring, exhibiting his or her fine clothes, or gossiping just as if we had been in a crowded drawing-room. There was quite a hum of such talk all through the crowd in which I stood, within four yards of the altar. If it had been an opera, not a church service, I should have very much admired the arrangements, or, as I believe the French call it, the *mise en scène*, of the whole ceremonial. As it was, I sighed for Spurgeon and his music-hall in St. George's Fields, which was worth a dozen of such shows. Yesterday, we had another view of Catholicism, which would, I fear, have gladdened the heart of Richard Spooner. It was the ascent of the *Santa Scala* at the Lateran, where various men, women, and children were climbing up the staircase on their knees, to earn, when they reached the top of it, an indulgence of a vast number of years, although, what an indulgence may be, I suppose that no one of them knew much better than myself, and I am strongly inclined to suspect that it is a point on which the Pope is quite as much in the dark as any of us. Considering that the *Santa Scala* was a staircase in the house of Pilate, and remembering by whom it is supposed to have been trodden, and on what occasion they believe him to have mounted it, I could not but envy them their faith even yet more than I pitied their credulity.

"The doing of Rome is, I find, a very great achievement. We have set about it in a very zig-zag,

hap-hazard fashion, letting each day decide for itself what we should do and where we should go, though with a general tendency to gravitate towards the Forum and the Coliseum, to which I take more than to all the rest put together. I need not tell you that my genius does not lie in what is called (I know not why) æsthetics: that is, I am but obtuse about pictures, statues, and architecture. My real passion is for books, of which I can find very few here; for trees, of which I see none to admire, except the noble stone pine; and for walks in the country, of which thus far I have not succeeded in finding one. . . . ."

To Mrs Dicey

Rome, 31st December, 1857

". . . . . The year 1857 is closing upon us in anxiety and pain on your account. May the coming year be more serene. Yet when I think how many years Dicey and you and I have been living together, and in what a variety and superabundance of mercies, I hardly know how to express any wish, either for you, or him, or ourselves, about the short remaining future, except the wish that we may all know how to accept with cheerful submission, and how to perform with spirit, whatever may be the will of our Heavenly Father respecting us. This afternoon I learnt from the Pope at least one lesson worth the learning. He came in great pomp to the Church of the Jesuits, to return his public thanksgivings for the mercies of the year which was on the eve of closing; and though the theatrical aspect of the whole service was repulsive

to me, the occasion of it was affecting, and his own demeanour was that of a man who really was moved by the remembrance of God's goodness to him. I sate two hours in the church waiting his arrival, and as I sate I took myself to task for not outrunning in gratitude the Pontiff, whom I suppose myself to exceed so much in orthodoxy. Nor did I forget the while you and your troubles, and to ask as best I could the removal of them, or that so long as they shall last they may bring with them many invigorating exercises of love, and faith, and patience.

"We are irresolute about our movements. . . . . But I did not, and do not, propose to write to you about all these things. My only object is to repeat the often repeated 'God bless and guide and support you,' which rises to my heart and to my lips as often as I think of all the cares by which you are surrounded. It is at least one consolation to remember that yours are not selfish cares, but a renewal of those cares of love with which you are so familiar.

"Ever most affectionately yours

"J. S."

To J. F. S. & M. R. S.

Rome, 3rd January, 1858

". . . . . This is the twenty-fourth day of our sojourn here, and during all those days there certainly have not been twenty-four hours altogether of anything less than unmitigated sunshine; and with the sun comes daily a wind which creeps into every crevice and pore of the skin, bringing to most Romans, and especially

to myself, a sort of cold which, without rising to the dignity of an illness, stands sadly in the way of activity and enjoyment. The great duty of sight-seeing has therefore languished during the past week —except that one day we explored the Vatican Library, and another day went to the Church of Ignatius Loyola, where the Pope came to offer his thanksgivings for the mercies of the year which was then just closing. The most extraordinary circumstance in the Library is that there is not a single book in it; that is, you might walk through the principal chamber, and through half a score of subordinate chambers, without suspecting that one of them contained books, if the superintendent of the exhibition did not inform you that books are to be found in the various ranges of closets and cupboards, of which the ornamental doors range from one end of the building to the other. On opening to us the doors of one of those closets, he exhibited to us various venerable MSS., one of which he called *Codex Alexandrinus*, and I believed him, but it has since occurred to me that it is not at Rome, but in England. Then we read an original letter from Henry VIII. to Anne Boleyn, and came away in a perfect dazzle with the multitude of magnificent saloons, paintings, ornaments, and curiosities on which we had been gazing. It is, I believe, a library of the most profound interest, but when exhibited as a mere 'spectacle,' it is one of the many things here which very few people can seriously wish to see a second time. The toil and bondage of sight-seeing are not easy to bear, yet the

sight of the Pope I would not willingly have missed. He is a man on whose countenance Nature has written benevolence and feebleness, I mean mental feebleness, in a most legible character. He looks just as becomes the promulgator of the Immaculate Conception, and the cat's-paw of Cardinal Wiseman. Everything one hears about him is honourable to his kindness of heart, and everything one knows about him attests the want of all princely and magnanimous qualities. . . . .

"I have been going about every day, except one, when I was confined to bed, looking out notable places; and although what remains of the ancient city is but little, and almost every bit of ruin you meet with conducts you into a very doleful controversy about its date, its builder, and its uses, still the natural landmarks are perfectly clear and indestructible; and there is a real and great pleasure in distinguishing each of the Seven Hills, all the old roads, the ground on which old Rome was built, and the manner in which new Rome has wandered away from it, and all the valleys through which the Tiber used to inundate the most populous districts. It is curious also to stand at the gate through which Alaric entered Rome, and at the gate where Hannibal menaced it, and to walk along the Appian and Flaminian ways with the most absolute certainty that they are the very roads so called in the books which one read at school. . . . .

"We have from Dr Strange, who lives there [at Naples] a confirmation of the horrible accounts of the effects of the recent earthquake, which, he says,

destroyed many thousand people—not at Naples itself, but in the provinces; but his experience leads him to think that Naples will be neither less nor more safe from the same visitations during the approaching spring than it usually has been, and on the whole I do not feel disposed to abandon the plan of going there from a vague apprehension of danger, or from the apprehension of being heartily frightened, which I confess I should very much dislike. . . . .

"If it be required to give a good reason why England is deserted every autumn and winter by so many of her children, the answer, I suppose, must be that it enables them to hold more confidently than ever by the conviction that, for people with a sufficiency of the means of living, England as much excels every other part of Europe as Europe excels the best parts of Africa. It is a thousand pities that I do not know how to write poetry, or I should become pathetic and sublime on that subject.

"God bless you, my dear children, with both the babes. Ever affectionately yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

To Mrs Russell Gurney

Hotel de Londres, Rome
17th January, 1858

"My dear E——,—Our correspondence droops, and lest it should die away altogether, I write to say that, inexhaustible as may be the topics suggested by a residence here, I feel that, as in England, the foremost on every tongue, and as I infer in every mind,

is still the weather—and not without reason. For, what are the revolutions of the Roman empire and of the Papacy to us compared with the inroads which the *tramontana* is daily making on our quietude? Since we came here, it has been blowing without intermission, except during two days, and all that time (now more than five weeks) the sun has been sailing from morning till night through a sky of the deepest blue, unsullied by a passing cloud. It tempts me to say of our own English sky and climate things which would shock your mother's anti-English prejudices, and your own Italian romance.

"I will, however concede to you that this City of Kings, Consuls, Emperors, Popes, and Artists, has a mute eloquence about it which may, perhaps, be surpassed at Jerusalem and Athens, but which is unrivalled everywhere else. Of the artists and their works, indeed, I have no right to say anything, the architectural works excepted, for I have seen but little, and understood less, of the sculpture and the paintings here. In fact, it is a service of some danger to visit them. The galleries feel like so many ice-houses, the passages into which out of this very brilliant and scorching sunshine, drives back every drop of blood from the surface of the body to the great organs of life within, much to their discomfort. But in an extra waistcoat, and wrapped in a great-coat in which I should not dare to show myself in London, I have found my way along the streets and piazzas, the circus, and baths, and churches, the Seven Hills, the ruins, the banks of the Tiber, the Viæ leading to

the Campagna, and some parts of the Campagna itself; and I have read in them, put together, such an epitome of the history of the world (I should rather say of Europe) as all the narratives which were ever written with the pen are totally unable to convey.

"What a gulf of ages it is across which the Coliseum and St Peter's look at one another! The Forum, and all the ruins in the midst of which it lies, are like some of the chapters in Isaiah and Ezekiel translated into stone. More than twelve centuries have they been lying on the very confines of the Papal city, in a gloom and solitude which seem to defy all interruption; nor have all the homilies which have been pronounced there all that time contained any such awful and pathetic delineation of the march of the retributive Providence of God. And then that Papal city: how full of meaning! and to anyone whose religion is constantly verified by the Old and the New Testaments (even though not exclusively derived from them) how full of melancholy suggestions and dark forebodings! *This*, the system of faith and worship which the Saviour lived to teach, and died to establish! This poor old Pope, with all his pitiful emulation of more than imperial grandeur, *His* Vicar upon earth! These mummeries of church theatricals, with the blessing of horses, and the exhibition of the infant Christ in His cradle, and the crawling up the staircase of Pilate's house, that worship in Spirit and in truth which Christ came to introduce amongst his people! It can never be, allow whatever you may for the histrionic tastes and habits of this southern Europe.

"And yet, amongst all these follies and superstitions, what strange vitality does the Church of Rome exhibit to this very hour! and what a record is the city through which I am daily walking of her vitality in past times! There is not one of the Popes over whom the Reformation triumphed, nor one of those who, in his turn, triumphed over the Reformation, whose name is not inscribed on some majestic monument. Though they failed to produce a noble city they succeeded in producing in every quarter, and almost in every street of it, some enduring record of what they did, and what they designed to do. The church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, in what was once the Baths of Diocletian, with the cloisters behind it, through which I walked two days since, form at once the most imposing apology for Pius IV. (the conqueror at the Council of Trent,) and the most impressive memorial of the power of Michael Angelo to unite the utmost grace and beauty to the most stern and simple grandeur. Then Sixtus V. is to be traced at every step of the way from the Trinità del Monte to the Lateran, occupying with his long and spacious lines of streets the whole crest of the hills to the north-east of Rome, as best became the most audacious and the ablest of the Popes who have reigned since the time of Innocent III. And so on comes one after another of these successors of St Peter, each proclaiming in some tablet or other the fact that he lived and died, in bondage indeed to the ideas of the Church he governed, but otherwise (during the last two hundred and fifty years at least)

in more than average respectability of character, till you come at last to the very worthy common-place personage who is to celebrate to-morrow the anniversary of the erection at St Peter's of the very chair in which St. Peter was accustomed to sit as Bishop of Rome, and on which he, Pio Nono, is then to be seated. Whence all this enduring life and activity in the very centre of all which we Protestants disesteem and despise? Perhaps for the reasons assigned by Edward Elliott on the Apocalypse. Perhaps because Popery is a compromise between Christianity, in which the Divine life exists in its greatest energy, and idolatry, in which the carnal life expands itself with the greatest force—thus in some sort combining in one the two opposite sources of vital power. Perhaps because, as the world is always under the dominion of some one dominant opinion or passion, the Pope has always contrived to govern his own section of the world by adopting and stamping with his infallible sanction every successive idea with which he could not wage a succesful war, but which he could reconcile with the maintenance of his own supremacy. Perhaps because, by relieving his adherents from the trouble and responsibility of thinking for themselves, he has always eased them of one of the heaviest of human burdens, and has enjoyed the immense advantages which the indolent and submissive always give to those to whom they have abandoned their own freedom. Perhaps because the imperial or sacerdotal dynasty, electing its own head from among some forty or fifty learned and aged

competitors, is of all forms of human government the most stable.

"If you ever read thus far, forgive me, and read one word more to assure you that I am your very affectionate, though very prosing uncle

"JAS. STEPHEN."

To Mrs Dicey

Rome, 4th February, 1858

". . . . . We are leaving Rome with a very profound sense of the interest the place is calculated to inspire, but with no regret, and with hardly a passing wish to visit it again. At these years, indeed, such wishes would be irrational, even if we were tempted to indulge them, but we have no such temptation. What Rome may be to the multitudes of our fellow-countrymen who are living here in ceaseless dissipation I know not; but in my eyes it is a place pre-eminently sombre, and suggestive of depressing thoughts. The Pope, whom I met twice in his carriage this afternoon, has the look of a man to whom life is a protracted penance; and the Campagna, over which I drove yesterday to Tivoli, has in that direction a solemnity and a dreariness far greater than on any other side of the city. When I reached Hadrian's Villa at the foot of the hills, and saw in what majestic luxury a Roman Emperor used to live, and how the theatres, baths, porticoes, and long subterranean galleries were now haunted by owls and bats, and overgrown by lines of solemn cypresses, and stripped of all their ornaments,

and overthrown and desolate as Nineveh or Babylon, and how the few inhabitants had the plague of the malaria written on their faces and persons, I could not but rejoice to escape from the whole scene, as from the catacombs the day before : and to avert my eyes from what seemed to bear the visible impress of the Divine displeasure. They were almost immediately afterwards turned to one of the most impressive sights which I have ever contemplated. From the summit, or from the depths of the falls of Tivoli, you look upon a landscape drawn by the hand of Nature herself as if for the express purpose of producing a contrast to the dark, featureless, uninhabited plains by which it is approached ; and to this natural picture man has added such impressive masses of buildings at one edge of that precipitous basin, and has given such a direction to the waters at the opposite edge, that the human additions are worthy of the creative workmanship. It is the only plunge of water I ever happened to see which seemed to me to justify the enthusiasm with which such things are so often described ; but it is really awful to see that overwhelming force in such constant and wild activity. Among the greater agencies of Nature, this is the only one which knows no pause or repose, but looks something like what would be the appearance of an unintermitted earthquake or thunderstorm. But the day was, as usual, a day of unclouded sunshine, and the mists raised by the waters crashing against their channel were illuminated by ceaseless, though ever-shifting rainbows. And while I was gazing at these,

you, dear, very dear N——, were watching over your husband, and probably weeping about your separation from your son. God will, I trust and pray, ere long wipe away all tears from your eyes. Till then, may they be directed to Him, and He, I doubt not, will be looking down in mercy on you."

To J. W. Heaviside

Foligno, 8th February, 1858

"Many thanks to you for a welcome letter *de rebus et personis Haileyburiensibus*, which reached me at Rome a little before I left it on my return homewards. I now write on that homeward journey at an hotel, such as one must come to Italy to see, for in England no hostelry at once so spacious and so dirty opens its doors for the reception of travellers. We had proposed to return home by way of Naples, but have been deterred by the dismal accounts which every day has brought of the continuance of the earthquakes there, and of the diseases and other miseries which they have left behind them. The mere danger of going there is probably very small; but we believe that there is also but small pleasure in living amongst a people oppressed with such calamities which we should not have any power to alleviate. We are therefore bending our steps towards the cities of central and northern Italy, hoping to have a view of the lakes in the early spring, which we formerly saw in the autumn.

"We remained at Rome just eight weeks, which is just about long enough to see the surface of most

things there, but not long enough to study any of them thoroughly. . . . .

" . . . . . Our experience of all these things is summed up in the general statement that Rome is the most interesting, fatiguing, dirty, exhilarating, and sombre capital city in the world—exhilarating, because the air, such as it was with us, was a constant tonic ; sombre, because it is impossible to resist the impression that you are looking at ruins attesting the Divine displeasure against the race of men who formerly dwelt there, and at a system of worship and of civil government which cannot be the object of the Divine approbation.

" With regard to the ceremonial of the Church of Rome, I cannot but suspect myself of some prejudice in the strong distaste with which I have been regarding it. Christianity may perhaps be a more catholic and expansive system than with my northern prejudices and insular habits I have been accustomed to suppose. It may have for these theatrical, gesticulating, excitable Italians, an aspect as genuine as that which it bears in our phlegmatic, calm, and sensible population, although the appearance with us and with them has scarcely anything in common. Their conversion of public worship into a series of dramatic actions may be their way of giving utterance to devotional feelings, but I can imagine no excuse for the creature worship which seems, at least, to be of the very essence of their devotions.

" Everything which I saw or heard in Rome itself of the civil government led me to suppose that it had

no hold on the attachment of the people; yet I do not suppose it to be a very severe despotism, and it certainly is not without some noble features. There are many magnificent public works of the present reign; and though Rome itself is a poverty-stricken place, owing whatever splendour it claims to the expenditure of English money there, yet that is not true of the Papal States in Umbria. I suppose there are very few countries in Europe which exhibit outward signs of industry and prosperity more unequivocal than those of the country through which I have been travelling the last two days. The great vale of Terni is one of the richest gardens of Europe, and the road from Spoleto to this place runs through another valley of at least twelve miles, so studded with towns and country houses as to remind us of some of the richest parts of England. Till these last two days, I had supposed that the Roman Catholic assertion of the prosperity of the Papal States was a pure fiction. I am now convinced that it is not wholly destitute of truth. . . . ."

To J. F. S.

Hotel New York, Florence
14th February, 1858

". . . . . I rejoice still more in the success of your 'Tom Brown' article, and in that which you anticipate from your article on Buckle. Altogether you have become a prodigy of diligence and resolute self-assertion. Time was when I enjoyed a repute as a writer of 'Edinburgh Reviews,' and from the bottom

of my heart I hope, as I very sincerely believe, that you will eclipse me even more than the elder Mill has been eclipsed by the younger. Perhaps the day will come when you may form the same wish about your own boy, and when what I now say will be more intelligible to you. In very deed the battle you are so manfully waging with the difficulties of life is the first among many gratifications which it has pleased God to bestow upon me in this evening of my days, and things are happening, and other things are yet to happen, rendering all such solaces necessary. May God bless and assist you.

"Your account of Dicey confirms the apprehensions which each successive letter of your aunt's has given. It is a very sad subject, on which I am unwilling to enter, at least for the present. . . . . And now for a few words about our recent movements. We avoided Naples, more on account of the miseries which the earthquakes have produced, than from any expectation of being ourselves the victims of any new earthquake, although there was not wanting some risk of the kind. So we hired a *voiturier* to bring us to Florence. He was nine days about it, though of those days we stopped two on the road, which I take to be on every account one of the most remarkable in Italy. Passing from one valley to another, each in turn encircled by snowy mountains, we saw much which it seemed to me not unfit that I, in my Cambridge capacity, should see. There was very much indeed to reconcile me to the apparent paradox of the Roman Catholic writers, who celebrate the Papal

government as eminently favourable to the growth of agricultural wealth. There was much to suggest how the physical structure of the country has, from the earliest times, tended to prevent the growth of any State embracing the whole of Italy, and why the different districts of it have ever been breaking away with a violent rebound from some despotic restraint, which for a while had forced them to such a union. I was quite surprised to see so extensive a region so entirely destitute of all grasses and other spontaneous verdure, and how very wide is the diffusion of that brown friable earth, called, I think, *tufo*, which attests the volcanic origin of the surface. I dare to say that in summer Italy wears a clothing pleasant to the eye. It is not so in winter, though it has every other element of beauty. At Narni, I took a rugged walk to see what I suppose to be the noblest of all existing specimens of Roman bridge architecture. At Terni, we all scrambled, in heavy rain, to the summit of what Lord Byron (*apud* Murray) declares to be the finest waterfall in Europe. At Assisi, we visited the churches and other monuments which attest the almost miraculous power exercised by St. Francis over his own and every succeeding generation. We were all agreed that we had seen at Rome no modern building of equal interest. At Perugia, we put on our antiquarian glasses or pretentions, and saw many strange works of the ancient Etruscans, and I roamed far away into the country to explore a tomb, excavated and ornamented by them ages before Rome was built. At the Lake Thrasimene we saw, with the utmost

possible distinctness, the field of battle—the defile through which the Roman army poured into the scene of danger,—the line upon which Hannibal's army was drawn out to meet them,—and the hill over which such Romans as survived were able to effect their escape. It is a singularly interesting sight, and very curious to find how fresh the traditions of the great battle are in the minds of all the country people. One of them was my guide to the place during a walk of many miles, and though not a guide by profession, seemed to know all about it, like the man who showed us over the field of Waterloo. The last of the notable places through which I wandered between Rome and Florence was the city of Cortona, where, says Murray, the Pelasgians fortified themselves long before Romulus built his cottage on the Palatine, which is enough to show that it must have been a very disagreeable thing to be a Pelasgian: the whole city being nothing else than a cluster of blind alleys built on the steepest slopes of the side of an almost inaccessible hill. Thence we came here, and are at this moment seated in a room of about sixteen feet high, broad and long in proportion, furnished in a style which, if not perfectly elegant, is at least highly ornamental and costly. It is, I believe, a kind of American hotel, in the capital of Tuscany, rising immediately above the Arno, which, I regret to say, is of a complexion very like that of the Avon, near Clifton, and seems scarcely to have any current at all. But it has all the painters and the poets on its side. We have seen very little of the city as yet, but I am quite enchanted with one or two of its chief marvels.

"From what I have said, you will gather that our journey has thus far been successful, although it is no light matter to be, during nine successive days, the property of a *vetturino*. . . . ."

My father returned to England at the end of March, to finish the preparation of his Cambridge lectures, to be delivered, as usual, in the May Term. My mother and I followed two or three weeks later, after spending a few days in Paris. He writes to her while there:—

12th, or perhaps 13th April, 1858

". . . . . I am not quite sure that I am not glad to miss M. de Tocqueville. . . . . I should like those outrageously clever people very much, if I might decidedly sit down as a dunce in the lowest room. But to pass for being oneself clever enough to give and take with the likes of them is not palatable. . . . ."

To the Miss Hodsons

[On the death of their brother, Major Hodson, of Hodson's Horse]

Westbourne Terrace
20th April, 1858

". . . . . To be entirely silent, or to say anything to the purpose, is alike impossible. When the Voice of God Himself thus speaks, in accents which, even though they may in reality be expressive of His love, must make the very heart ache of those to whom they are immediately addressed, they will sometimes find a confirmation of their reliance on the love of their

Father which is in Heaven by being assured of the love and sympathy of their earthly friends. We, the three inmates of this house, mourn that it is in words only that we can send you such an assurance. Accept them, my dear children, as an earnest of our profound, though ineffectual, desire to soothe your sorrow. But time, and the energetic use of time, will steal it away; and as time advances, you will live with a continually increasing foresight of your re-union to those members of your household who have gone before you. And as even now the remembrance of your father and mother is among the most grateful of your thoughts, so ere long will be the recollection of your brother. For to have gained his place among the noblest of those who, in this awful war, have lived and died a self-sacrifice to the right, is to have left you all the inheritance of a name in which you may devoutly rejoice. . . . ."

To H. Venn

July, 1858

" My dear Henry. . . . . I could find it in my evil heart to envy you the larger occupations and more profound interests which are hurrying you from one to another of the three angles of this triangular island. It is, however, some compensation to know that I am not burdened with your necessity of finding the best solution of what I confess appears to me an insoluble problem—I mean the problem: How shall a dominion, founded in injustice, fraud, and bloodshed, and upheld to this very hour by methods

which no true disciple of Christ can really justify,—how shall such a dominion be made subservient to the propagation of the Gospel of Christ? The real difficulty in our way is that, according to the French phrase, we have placed ourselves in a false position, doing whatever the Christian law forbids as an introduction to diffusing the Christian faith, and inculcating Christian morality. I rejoice to think that wiser, better, and more hopeful men than I am (yourself pre-eminently among the number) are engaged in the attempt to answer the question. May God bless and prosper that attempt.

"Very affectionately yours

"JAMES STEPHEN."

In the summer of this year, my father was for some weeks alone in London, while my mother and I were in North Wales with my uncle, Henry Venn, and his children, and his unmarried brother and sister, John and Emelia Venn, from Hereford. He writes from Westbourne Terrace:

To his Wife

16th August, 1858

". . . . . Yesterday, I went twice to our own church. I am sorry to say that Mr —— does not please me. I am sorry, because I should be a better man if I were better pleased, and in the way to grow better still by hearing him. But I can't compel my judgment to approve, or my taste to like, his method. I dare not trust myself to say why, lest I should write satirically and irreverently of my teacher. . . . ."

17th August, 1858

". . . . . I am wonderfully bored by Mr Forster, who will insist on my dining with him and her on Friday, to meet M. Guizot (think of that!) in the evening. I heartily wish M. Guizot back in France, but whether I wish him to be back as Prime Minister is another question. He made a very bad one last time."

To Henry Taylor

29 Westbourne Terrace, London, W.

17th August, 1858

". . . . . There is nobody left in London except myself and the Lord Mayor. How his lordship amuses himself I know not, but I am reading that I may write, and writing that I may lecture. My change of crop from despatches to lectures makes but little difference as to the amount of the produce. I am like a farmer who, towards the end of his lease, scourges his land unmercifully. I should earn just as much or as little money and worship if I could be satisfied to re-preach my old discourses, but I should lose my occupation; and my thoughts, which I now to a certain degree compel to dress and fall into line and march, would be sprawling about in all quarters. A job is as necessary to me as a cigar or Lord Bacon is to Spedding;—so necessary, indeed, that (I am almost ashamed to add) I have engaged myself to take a second in a performance about to come off at Liverpool, in which Lord John Russell is to play first fiddle. . . . ."

To his Wife

29 Westbourne Terrace
12th August, 1858

". . . . . As to the two rooms . . . . . take none at present, nor till you hear that I am coming. I am, to use my father's favourite phrase, between hawk and buzzard at present."

14th August, 1858

". . . . . I earnestly desire that you should have the benefit of as much time as you can with your brothers and Emelia. You *know* that I most sincerely think of H. and J. and E. as the three best and wisest of all living persons whom I ever meet. Rarely indeed do I meet any of them. So much the worse for me, but I really cannot bear that you should throw away this opportunity of learning from them, and of communicating with them. I am deeply in earnest about this. . . . . Remember your promise to 'obey,' and be obedient.

"I do well enough here. I am, or fancy myself, busy; and I usually catch a talk with somebody daily at the Athenæum. . . . ."

20th August, 1858

"F—— is to dine with Forster this evening, and to meet Guizot, and then to sleep here. I shall be glad of his presence in the evening (he will serve as a buffer to the great man's steam-engine) and I shall not be sorry to hear something of himself afterwards. . . . .

"Your mountain tops and crimson sunsets deserve, I doubt not, more admiration than I could get up for them, but I am far from sure that there is any place in England (I must not hanker back to Italy) much better worth the contemplating in August than the three parks round which I revolve daily, beginning or ending with the Regent's Park. One question which I often weigh as I walk along them is this. In a few days a letter will come from the Vice-Chancellor asking me to fix my subject and times of lecturing for 1859. I propose to fix them both, but to say also (subject to your good pleasure and better judgment) that they are the last lectures I mean to deliver at Cambridge. The reasons being—first, that if I live to the year 1860, I shall not want the money, either in that or in any future year; (second), that it is decorous for me to retreat while yet I have a choice about it; (third), that at the end of 1859 will end our tenure of this house, and that it may be well for us to be quite free about the—what next? (fourth), that I am bound to give full notice of my resignation, that they may have the fullest opportunity of making a good choice of my successor; (fifth), that I should think it right to emancipate myself from this and all other superfluous worldly encumbrances by that time —even if it did not press on me a little [more] heavily than quite suits my years. Think of all this, and make up your mind betimes.

"I have spent all my money! is it not scandalous? I mean all my silver money, which amounted when you went to 2s 6d—the gold money (£5) being all alive and well. . . . ."

21st August, 1858

"Yesterday F—— dined, and I spent the evening with the Forsters. M. Guizot and *Guillem* were there. Guizot was really agreeable, talking nothing but English, and to my great content, never uttering one sentence in good grammar. If we had talked French, I should hardly have done much worse. He talked chiefly about France, saying just the kind of things of which Senior's 'Journal' is full, about Louis Napoleon. It is not worth while to repeat any of them. The upshot was that Napoleon is a lazy glutton, and is meditating some Italian conspiracy—that is, some conspiracy against the Italian Government."

Westbourne Terrace
23rd August, 1858

". . . . . People never dispute about any opinions of the soundness of which they are absolutely certain. They try to convert each other merely to have a suffrage the more in support of some opinion which each of them holds doubtingly. But even when, like me, they never dispute about anything, that, I fear, is no conclusive proof that their faith in their own conclusions is indestructible. . . . ."

Westbourne Terrace
25th August, 1858

". . . . . About China and the Eastern world, I agree with you, that few things ever were so strange, as that a year ago we were at war with Persia, China, and with half India, 150,000 of our troops being our bitterest enemies, and that now we are at peace with Persia and China, and are victorious in India. There is nothing in history like this. What it means I

know not; but this I know, that it enhances our national obligations towards other nations, and towards the Supreme Ruler of them all; and that it is evidently provoking in France the enmity and jealousy which may any day break out into actual hostilities.

"Yesterday nothing occurred, save that I met and talked with Monckton Milnes and Mr Forster. Ten minutes of such gossip, literary and political, as they deal in, is not amiss to break up the monotony of one's own solitary thoughts. To diversify them, I read De Tocqueville's book, and sundry other books, French and English, marvelling a little as I read about the boundless superiority of spoken wisdom to written wisdom. If I had met any man yesterday who had said to me a tenth part of the notable things which De Tocqueville addressed to me in print, they would have sunk tenfold deeper into my mind and memory than his teaching actually sank. I read this morning a sermon of Archer Butler's, which, if I had heard it from a pulpit, would have formed a kind of epoch in my life; whereas it has not left behind a much more profound impression than the leading article in to-day's 'Times.' I doubt whether anybody quite understands this, or can explain it. I for one cannot; but if I were a clergyman I would set myself to meditate upon it, and to make out why it is that the living voice and presence gives to teaching a point and an impulse so very much superior to that of written and mute and impersonal teaching. To be sure a man *may*, when boxed up in that unsightly chest, be as inanimate or as monotonous as the

sounding-board above him; or make a roaring like that which proceeds from the kind of sounding-board (hyperbolic or parabolic) in the focus of which our excellent William Farish used to place his head—or he may, like that admirable person, be a kind of buffer breaking the shock of the pathetic or the sublime—or by some other endowment he may have attained to the art of reconciling the sublime with the soporific; but, however it is brought about, it is a marvellous atchievement (so *I* spell the word) to have all the talk to oneself upon subjects of universal and surpassing interest, and to dismiss all one's hearers as drowsy as if they had been nodding over Tillotson's sermons. However, they do something of the same kind in the House of Commons.

"Can you tell me what possesses me to make me write all this to you who never do preach? But yes you do, in your districts, and it may be of service to you there. . . . ."

26th August, 1858

"..... I walked across Wimbledon Common and saw our house, and met the ghosts of many old wanderings and talkings—grim ghosts they usually are. . . . ."

In the autumn of this year, we spent some weeks at Dorking, and while there my father was asked to speak and to preside over a "section" of the Social Science Association, at its second annual meeting, to be held in October in St George's Hall, Liverpool. He and I accordingly spent a few days during its sittings in the house of a relation living in the neighbourhood. Before going there, he wrote:

To the Rev. R. Wall

9th October, 1858

". . . . . Nor can any criterion of merit, whether moral or intellectual, be more deceptive than this of examinations. Minds of slow growth, though often the most powerful of all minds, are under-rated. The most self-denying diligence of the comparatively dull gains no credit at all. There is no allowance for the peculiarities of taste which determine the pursuits of some; nor for the nervous and irritable temperament which defeats the attempts of others to do themselves justice. The *élite* of such examinations are simply the persons who have the best chance of success in future life—not the most meritorious persons, nor those whom it is most necessary to sustain and to encourage.

"'To him that hath shall be given,' is a rule of Divine justice, because it is administered by Divine omniscience and equity. As a rule for the guidance of ignorant and partial men, it ceases to be just. It is indeed the law and the habit of that rough world for which our sons are in training; it is the schoolboys' law and habit in their dealings with one another; but it is not a mother's law, or a father's law, nor ought it, I think, to be the law of those who, as teachers, stand in *loco parentum*.

"Further, I do not like the Cambridge project, because it falls into the all but universal error of measuring learning by the breadth rather than by the depth. Give me a youth who, at the age of eighteen,

had mastered the differential calculus. He should be in my first class, if he maintained that Mary Queen of Scots was the grand-daughter of Elizabeth. Or give me another youth who had mastered Hallam, and he should be in my first class if he told me that the three angles of a triangle were equal to one right angle and a half. The great end of all teaching—I mean the great intellectual end—is answered when you have reached two points. The first is the knowing any one subject accurately and thoroughly; the second is the acquisition of a hearty love for books.

"The schoolmaster who has conferred these benefits on his pupils may be quite at ease about their future progress; but he may reasonably be very ill at ease about their success at either the Oxford or Cambridge examination.

"That they will raise the standard of 'middle class' education I must doubt. They inscribe on it many more quarterings, but that, you know, is not the highest style of heraldry.

"I am an old man, and therefore I presume I am the victim of a certain rigidity of opinion, which is said always to characterise old age. If so, I am not fit to speak to or for the generation which is now in such animated movement on every side. Yet it is a movement which still very deeply interests and animates me, or I should not have accepted the invitation which is bringing me to Liverpool. When I am there, I shall be most happy to become personally acquainted with yourself and Mr Howson. . . . ."

He writes from Liverpool:—

To his Wife

October, 1858

"This is the first moment since my arrival that I have been able to sit down to write, and at this present moment a dreary man is reading a dreary paper about statistics. I have been speaking this morning for an hour and a half. . . . .

". . . . . On the whole my part in this strange business has gone off very well, and the addresses of Lord Brougham, of Lord John Russell, of Lord Carlisle, and of Lord Shaftesbury were really as good as possible, and exceedingly interesting. . . . ."

14th October, 1858

". . . . . On Monday evening we all went to St George's Hall (five miles off), and in that most magnificent building we heard Lord John Russell *read* a discourse to not much less than four thousand people. It was a very good discourse, and was received enthusiastically. . . . .

". . . . . On Tuesday we *all* went again to Liverpool. The plan was that five people, of whom I was the last, should speak on that day. But Brougham chose to add himself to the list as a sixth, and as first. Yet he spoke so strangely well that I could not be angry with him. Before he began, he came up to me and said, 'I am going to use some words of yours, though without naming you.' He did use them, and said to me afterwards, 'Well, I think your sarcasm succeeded admirably. It was better received by them than anything else I said.' Brougham was followed by Lord

Carlisle, by Mr Cooper, and by Lord Shaftesbury. I had, at the end of Lord Shaftesbury's discourse, some *affectionate* and confidential talk with him, which I can't write now. . . . ."

15th October, 1858

". . . . . Yesterday I sat in my full-blown dignity as President of this Section, over which I am presiding at this present writing. . . . .

" Yesterday I had a Miss Something making a long address, and not a bad one. I had also a fight with some ferocious Radicals, to whom I spoke stoutly and Conservatively, to their great wonderment and discontent. . . . ."

" An endless noise of talk and speech-making is in my ears from morning to night. At this instant I am writing by stealth. . . . .

" The whole thing is very strange and amusing. But it must be for talk hereafter. . . . .

" You must remember that we breakfast at eight, reach this place (five miles off) by ten, hold meetings till four, and then go to the early dinner (half-past four), and then to some meeting. It makes everybody giddy except Brougham, who makes everybody else so. . . . ."

17th October, 1858

". . . . . On the whole the last week interested me deeply and amused me much, but I had rather not have such another just now. . . . ."

In the winter of 1858-9 my father's health began decidedly to fail. A very bad cold in January pulled him down very much, and he was never afterwards

really well. In February he went to Cambridge to hold an examination, and writes :—

To his Wife

Bull Hotel, Cambridge

8th February, 1859

". . . . . We have this year just three candidates to be examined, and I think five, if not six, examiners, which is absurd. . . . ."

Cambridge, 9th February, 1859

". . . . . Leslie came here this morning, bringing with him his blind friend, to whom I talked for an hour, and, I hope, amused him. He was in excellent spirits : I mean that Mr Fawcett was so.*

" I called yesterday on Lady Affleck, and to-day I had a walk for an hour with her and Whewell in the Trinity Cloisters, while it rained without. You may guess how much talking I had to do. . . . . but they were both friendly, and it is pleasant to be treated friendlily. . . . ."

On returning to London, still very unwell, he determined to try some further change of air, and went alone to Weymouth for a few days. An accidentally prolonged walk which he took there, caused an indisposition from which he never entirely recovered. He was laid up completely for a few days, and my mother records in her Journal that he was so patient that, until enlightened by the surgeon in attendance, she had had no idea of the great suffering he had gone through. From this time his health was a cause

* Henry Fawcett—afterwards Postmaster-General.

of continual anxiety to her, and suffering to himself: very quietly borne, as always. He was able to go to Cambridge and deliver his lectures in the May Term, for the last time.

To his Wife

Bull Inn, Cambridge,

4th May, 1859

". . . . . I had thirteen auditors to-day, so I am getting on in the world. I find that a recent change in the law explains, or nearly explains, the desertion of me. . . . . Inimitable and captivating as my lectures are, few will pay for them the tax of keeping ten terms, when by attending some one else, they can get off with attending nine terms only. Is *your* vanity soothed? Mine is quite at ease, and always has been. . . . ."

5th May, 1859

". . . . . I read the papers, and sigh over them. But what avails such reading or sighing! Or, being what we ourselves are, what would it avail to be dwelling in a world without news, that is, in a world where, all being good and agreeable, we should all be in danger of going to sleep together. . . . ."

University Arms Hotel, Cambridge

24th May, 1859

". . . . . I am thinking (tell C——) very seriously about the use of my time (such time as may yet be

mine) and so, of *her* time hereafter. I think to complete Vol. III. of my existing 'Lectures.' To what end? Why, to keep away from idleness and utter uselessness. To the old remark—*Il faut vivre*—the old answer is a very good one. But to the remark—*Il faut s'occuper*—I know not what answer could be made. . . . .

"God bless you. You well know that, though much addicted to write nothing and to talk nothings, I am not without many and many a feeling which goes deeper than such writing or such talk might seem to imply. But I hate to sit down and put those deeper thoughts on paper. If I do, so sure as I read the writing over, it is torn or burnt. . . . . J.S."

In June, he spent about a week at Tunbridge Wells, in search of health, and writes:—

13th June, 1859

". . . . . If I was quite well I should be feeling dull; but not having the least wish to speak, I sit composedly silent all the day, having begun to take notes (tell C——) for the last and most improved edition of my 'Lectures,' Vol. III. Very absurd, yet quite inevitable. Without some book to write, I should be as you would be without your workhouse and your almshouses.

"So we are to have Lord Palmerston back again. What audacity of health and strength and self-confidence he must have! But it is evidently an arrangement for the passing day only, and somehow I don't feel as if I cared anything about it. There is

a proclamation of Louis Napoleon which half convinces me that he is about to make a great *coup de théâtre* of this war, and to satisfy himself with enacting the magnanimous. That is, I really begin to think that, for the present, he limits his views to making the world stare, and to winning statues and popularity in Italy. But he is on an inclined plane, on which no man could stop himself at pleasure. . . ."

15th June, 1859

". . . . . I see that Campbell is Chancellor—the first man who ever got so high a place at so late an age, or who ever got any place from so aged a Prime Minister. . . . .

". . . . . Strange times, the present and the coming! It is all up with the Papal Sovereignty. But I am much mistaken if that be not all the better for Popery.

"I think to take another carriage to-day, and to go in it to Buckhurst, that I may have another look at those glorious beech trees in the park there. I do really, and without any affectation (so far as I am aware) love magnificent trees. In fact, the face of nature seems to me to be growing younger and more beautiful as my own face grows older and uglier. A glass in this room caught my eye yesterday, and for some minutes I looked steadfastly on my own visage. I am not sure that I should have known it to be mine, if there had been any other possible solution of its appearance in that mirror. What I thought of it I shall not say,—save that it surprised me (among other things) by its leanness. . . . ."

After this, my father and mother were never again separated during his life. They went together on one or two little expeditions into the country, but his health did not improve. In July, we went to our favourite old haunt, Ilfracombe, whence he writes to my brother Fitzjames:

To J. F. S.

Hillsborough Terrace

16th August, 1859

". . . . . Thank you and M—— for the very kind letters which reached us this morning. With a very heavy heart, I am forced to agree with you that we must give up the hope of having your family here, and that you must find some other sea-bathing place. The fact is, that I certainly have not been improving of late. On the contrary, I have been losing appetite, and flesh, and strength. Dr —— sent me a very strong exhortation to go to Homburg. . . . . I have not very much faith in Homburg waters, nor in any other waters, nor, indeed, in any remedial measures of a medicinal kind. But if I have any chance at all, it is, I think, from the constant change of air, of diet, and of scenery, which one finds on the Continent. If we go to Homburg, it will be with the hope of some continental journey afterwards. . . . ."

We returned to London in August for medical advice to decide this question of going to Homburg, and were encouraged to do so. Accordingly, on the

22nd August, we set out, and reached Homburg on the 26th, after a very trying journey. He writes on the 30th to Fitzjames:—

Homburg

30th August, 1859

". . . . . Although for whatever relates to ourselves generally, and to myself specially, you must look for intelligence to the one or the other of my companions, yet I will say, in as few words as will serve my purpose, that our journey was exceedingly hot and fatiguing—to myself almost intolerably so. . . . . This is Tuesday, and still I have hardly got over my fatigue. I have, however, betaken myself to the great art cultivated here, which is that of swallowing water by daybreak at what is called the Elizabethan spring. After three performances of that kind, I have no right to expect much improvement. But on the whole I am improved. . . . . But I am quite clear that it must be a protracted business, nor can I at all expect that at the end of so short a time as four weeks I have any chance of being well enough to resume my ordinary English habits. This is a very remarkable place to look upon—a very high table-land lying within a semi-circle of woods and hills, and throwing up springs on all sides. To my own eye it is, on the whole, if not exactly a beautiful, yet a rich, gay, and princely scene. However, I have time only for what is more material to you.

"I received your introduction yesterday. I hold it to be a great improvement to the report; but

it will be best to say as briefly as I can how I think it might even yet be improved. . . . .

". . . . . I have nothing else to say about the introduction, excepting that, as a whole, it seems to me to throw great light on what follows. And on what follows I must just now be silent, for the following reason. Ever since I saw you till this day I have been quite unequal to any kind of mental activity, so that, though I have read a considerable part of your printed draft, I have not yet qualified myself to say anything about it. I feel, indeed, that what I have now been dictating about the introduction savours strongly of the Elizabethan well, in which I am tippling away my understanding every morning. I will do my best to write what occurs to me on the rest of the book which you gave me . . . . the printer of which, by the way, deserves condign punishment. Send him here, and he shall have it, in the form of what is here called the 'Cesarien-brunnen.' . . . ."

This was the last letter my father ever wrote. The waters had at first seemed to suit him, and at any rate gave some relief; but he steadily grew weaker, and at the end of a fortnight slight wandering began. He was very anxious to "go home," and the doctor advised us to set out, thinking that travelling might relieve the restlessness. We reached Coblentz on Sunday, 11th September, but there it became obvious that he could go no further, and on Wednesday, the 14th, he gradually became unconscious, and quietly died at eleven p.m.

My brother Fitzjames had joined us about two hours before the end; and he returned to England with us the next evening, my mother having decided that the funeral should be at Kensal Green, where it took place accordingly on the 20th September. The inscription chosen by Fitzjames for the tombstone was: "Be strong and of good courage, for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." Fifteen years later my mother was laid by his side.

She had been to him for nearly forty-five years (to use his own words) his "ever-beloved friend and comforter, and everything else that a woman can be and ought to be to a man;" and during the fifteen years of her widowhood she spoke of herself as becoming more and more fully acquainted with him. For nine years she spent almost her whole time in visiting and trying to help her poor neighbours. Then her wonderful health in some degree failed, and for the remaining six years she had to live the life of a comparative invalid; but it was a bright and serene evening of life. She was surrounded by her children and grandchildren, in whom she took unfailing delight; and her cheerful acquiescence in whatever was appointed never failed her.

I remember saying to a dear friend that to have been my father's child was like having been brought up in a Cathedral. In his presence, the very atmosphere seemed full of awe and reverence. Happily

for him, and for his children, our mother's influence was that of the open air and sunshine.

For to him the painful side of life was specially vivid. To a man of so deeply devotional a temperament and such wide and tender sympathies as his, the possession of much speculative keenness of thought, and a constitutional tendency to scepticism, necessarily provided a severe inward discipline. He could not divest himself of the hair-cloth with which Nature had clothed him from his birth. An unsparing severity of self-judgment, and an awful sense of the insolubility of great problems—or rather of the one great problem of the existence of evil—overshadowed his life, and made him often "groan, being burdened." I think that, to the end of his life, he clung to the hope that somehow and somewhere in the teaching of the Church of England there was a standard of the purest attainable truth; yet his habit of mind with regard to individual teachers was frankly critical, and his general temper avowedly "latitudinarian." He did not, I think, believe in the possibility of attaining in this life to the complete reconcilement of all the scattered rays of truth which yet appeared to him separately to have claims on his allegiance, and therefore to be in themselves (though not visibly to us) reconcileable. He never ceased the struggle to distinguish, even in what was most dear and sacred to himself between the true gold and the ore. He never allowed either words or practice to become merely conventional, or to pass unchallenged by his keen intellect—deeply as he recognized the limits of its

function as door-keeper to the sanctuary in which faculties far deeper than the intellect might bow and receive their nourishment. In my dear father, the winnowing of feeling by thought never ceased, any more than the informing of thought by feeling. Therefore the flame of his spiritual life was not for us veiled or distorted by any suspicion of unreality. We may have found ourselves constrained to abandon some of his opinions and some of his practices; but never has the fact that he held them ceased to weigh in their favour,—never have we abandoned what he thought or what he did, except for the sake of the supreme object at which he aimed—faithfulness to the Light, obedience to Truth.

In my father's case, faithfulness to Light, obedience to Truth, meant emphatically following the Lamb. In the letter to Mr Carlyle, given above,* in which he endeavoured, under very deep feeling, to describe the ground of his religious life and experience, he says that however remote he may be from the character of a Christian, he is "bound by links stronger than death to Him from whom that holy name is derived." He spoke of himself as walking through life always with the sense of having Christ at his right hand. No one could live with him without being aware of the depth and tenderness of his personal devotion to the Divine Son of Man and Son of God, to whom he was bound by those "links stronger

* Page 176.

than death." It is in this central depth of his innermost life and worship that I feel his hold upon my own reverent sympathy to be entirely undiminished, nay, continually growing. While no one of his three surviving children continued to hold precisely that form of belief in which we were brought up, his influence upon us all has been deep and enduring beyond what I can tell. For my own part, I may say that the divergence is as far as possible from being fundamental; indeed, it has seemed to myself to be largely the result of loyalty to his fundamental faith and principles, with which I desire to avow my deep and entire unity.

For, indeed, such deep-rooted faith as his is, I believe, incompatible with entirely stationary opinions. My father died about a year before the publication of Darwin's "Origin of Species." I cannot doubt that, if he had lived to share in the great outburst of discussion and upheaval of thought which followed that event, many of his religious opinions would have undergone profound modification, as have those of all honest thinkers in the last fifty years. I cannot see how any truly living thought can be exempt from gradual modification and correction. I am sure that my father would never have wished to screen his most cherished beliefs from the full light of day. But his own inward experience had, I believe, been such as to make it impossible for him to exclude the idea of "superhuman influences on the mind of man" from his habitual recognition. He would no doubt have acknowledged that this was a belief of which it

was beyond his power to demonstrate the truth, (if indeed it admits of any demonstration); but I am sure that the belief was interwoven with the whole groundwork of his thought and experience, and that if the sceptical tendency of his mind was too marked to allow even this belief to pass unquestioned, he yet returned to it again and again with a growing force of conviction. I feel, therefore, that however the outline of my father's beliefs might have been affected by a wider acquaintance with modern thought and science, the source from which they sprang was beyond the reach of change. The springs of prayer are deeper than the springs of thought; and utterances arising from a living experience of Divine discipline have a truth beyond that of mere exactitude. My father might conceivably have become less "orthodox" than he was, but no change of opinions could, I feel sure, have made him other than a devout worshipper and disciple.

His was a mind ready to recognize and to delight in all true faith, whatever its outward form. The perpetual pre-occupation of his mind was the endeavour, not only to understand, but to welcome (to understand through a resolute welcoming of it) the Divine Will. Not by thought alone, but by the daily and hourly uplifting of the heart for the wisdom which is from above, and by an unceasing struggle to live in accordance with the measure of that wisdom already bestowed, did he strive to acquaint himself with God. Even in the years of severest official labour, and continued exposure to attacks peculiarly

painful to his very sensitive and nervous temperament, his watch over his own heart never ceased,—his thoughts were ever dwelling on the unseen and eternal realities. In the year 1846, when the pressure of official business was very severe, my mother was so much impressed by the peculiar beauty and tenderness of his prayers in the family worship, that she could not resist taking them down in shorthand (unknown to him) for about three weeks. She was then checked by a scruple of conscience, and put away the book, never to be opened again till after his death, when she found in it such comfort as no other words could have given her at that time. In its pages I find abundant confirmation of my own recollections as to the very rare quality of his devotional exercises. It was his custom frequently to give short expositions of the passages (generally from the Gospels) read at our morning prayers; and to those expositions I look back as having laid the foundation of almost all my own religious thought. They certainly impressed me more deeply and lastingly than any later teaching has done, and left with me a thankworthy and abiding sense of the wealth of spiritual meaning to be drawn from the Gospel stories and parables. I think that, as we grew up, he discontinued the expositions; and, as his health suffered in later years from repeated illnesses, he became increasingly inclined to fall back upon the use of the collects and other prayers from the Church services; but to the last he would often put up most touching petitions in his own words—sometimes, when alone with my

mother and me, praying by name for the children he had lost, as well as for each of the survivors.

It was not his habit, or my mother's, to speak very freely of these innermost feelings. Nothing approaching any intrusion on the privacy of others was conceivable in them. I can see, on looking back, that they checked rather than encouraged any disposition to religious excitement in us. It was chiefly a kind of instinctive consciousness of the profound reverence to which my father's mind was attuned, that so powerfully influenced those about him. His feeling was certain to propagate itself through his most expressive play of countenance, voice, and manner, and no one could live with him and disregard it. As my brother Leslie has said, "he was a living 'categorical imperative' . . . . . we knew that he loved us, that his character was not only pure, but chivalrous"—and to this I would add, not only pure and chivalrous, but holy and humble; yet capable of a jealousy for the honour of the Sacred Name which severely checked any undue freedom of the lips in reference to it.

I scarcely know how far this habitual reserve may for other eyes veil the religious significance, and the beauty of spirit, which I see in the preceding letters. I know that, with his very voice sounding in my ears, as it does after these forty-six years of outward silence and inward growing comprehension, I cannot read them quite dispassionately. But I feel that at a time when not only every opinion, but every method, is being unsparingly tested, any glimpse into such a

life as my father's is likely to be helpful to some. For if our object be not the formation of a complete system of thought, but the practical solution, each one for himself, of the riddle of existence—if we are seeking, not so much increase of knowledge, as increase of wisdom—we shall assuredly find our best teaching neither in thought alone, nor in feeling alone, but in the experience of an upward-tending life.

NOTE

NOTE

The following extracts from an unfinished letter of my father's show his attitude with regard to the authority of Scripture. I have long counted it as one of the chief blessings we owed to him, that with all his deep reverence for the Bible, and his constant care in making us acquainted with its contents, it was yet put before us not as infallible, but as inexhaustible—as supplying not so much proof, as edification. He was accustomed in speaking of the Bible as a whole, and occasionally of particular doctrines or difficulties, so to dwell on the uncertainties of interpretation, and so to illustrate by examples the inherent ambiguity of language, that to those accustomed to his teaching the discussions and discoveries of later years could bring no violent disturbance of faith.

After comparing the real unanimity attainable in the use of mathematical language with the "infinite differences of opinion which lie hidden" under the simplest historical statement, he says—"Locke and Jeremy Taylor maintain that any one is a Christian who believes in Jesus as the Messiah. Probably there

is no one who bears the Christian name who would not assent to this very short creed. Do all believers mean the same thing when they make this assertion? If so, St. John agreed with those who denied that He had come in the flesh, and Calvin so far agreed with Servetus. All Christians subscribe to the statement that Jesus rose from the dead on the third day; but what an infinity of debate is comprised within the limits of this declaration . . . . . Make what statement you will touching any matter of fact, and obtain as universal a concurrence as you will in that statement, you will still discover that you have reached a verbal and not a real conformity, and have made a compromise to put an end to disputing, instead of attaining a real identity of opinion.

"If therefore we should acknowledge a verbal inspiration (which seems to me to involve insuperable difficulties,) yet the inspired words must raise different ideas in different minds; and though we might all rejoice to adopt a symbol dictated by the Source of Truth himself, yet even with such a symbol in our hands we should speak alike, not think alike . . . . . For all the common purposes of human life, language is not merely an adequate, but an admirable, instrument. We understand each other perfectly well enough to co-operate in all domestic duties and social pursuits, and talk over the state of the weather, the price of corn, and the prospects of political parties with a perfect unconsciousness of the latent differences of our meaning, and without much real inconvenience from them. Even so it is, so long as we employ the

language of revelation for the uses for which it was given,—that is, to purify the affections, and to direct the conduct of life. But the moment that we use language, popular or scriptural, for scholastic and not for practical purposes, we are driven into inextricable difficulties. It is like an attempt to convert cordage into the strings of a musical instrument. Our common speech is made for coarse handling and for rough uses. Excellent as it is for such purposes, it fails altogether when entirely diverted from them. If religion related to form or quantity and was an affair of geometry or of algebra, I should be disposed to put all heretics on the treadmill; but immersed as it is and must be in sensuous things, so long as we, its recipients, are denizens of this world of sense, its propositions must be indefinite in reality, however definite they may be in appearance. 'By their fruits ye shall know them' is the rule by which we should judge of other men's faith, though this is not a sufficient rule for self-judgment. Give me a devout, humble, and virtuous man who calls himself a Christian, and I shall not be uneasy about his opinions . . . . ."

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